

# THE NATION

## AND ATHENÆUM

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### EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE League Assembly at the end of last week elected nine of its members to non-permanent seats on the Council. Poland, Rumania, and Chile were installed for three years; Holland, Colombia, and China for two years; Belgium, Salvador, and Czechoslovakia for one year. By more than the necessary two-thirds majority Poland was designated eligible for re-election at the end of her three years' service, but it does not, of course, follow that she will then be re-elected. No other State came forward as a candidate for this privilege, but two others may, under the new arrangements, have eligibility for re-election conferred upon them at any time during their periods of office. The election was all arranged beforehand, as is shown by the fact that the results were accurately forecast by well-informed observers at Geneva. This is not the ideal method of conducting a ballot, but the circumstances were exceptional, nine members having, on this occa-

sion only to be elected at the same time, and special precautions being necessary to avoid any repetition of the March fiasco. Next year there will be three vacancies to fill, and it is probable that the form of proportional representation known as "the single transferable vote" will be adopted. The different quarters of the world are more fairly represented on the new Council than they were on the last, but it may be doubted whether China, which is in solution, and little Salvador, were wisely selected for membership.

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Other happenings in Geneva itself have been put into the shade by the Briand-Stresemann conversation at a wayside inn on the French side of the frontier. All that is officially known of this discussion is contained in a *communiqué* which M. Briand gave out to the Press on their return to Geneva. "The two Ministers," we are told, "reconciled their points of view" with regard to a general solution of all the outstanding problems between their two countries, and "each of them reserved the right to refer to their respective Governments. If their points of view are approved by their Governments they intend to resume their conversation with the object of obtaining the end to be desired." There is something in the tone of this communication which suggests a consciousness on M. Briand's part that he had gone rather far in his conversation and might have difficulty with M. Poincaré and his Cabinet. He was in high spirits, however, and added a characteristic touch in his interview with the journalists:—

"One thing I can tell you," he said, "While we were sitting at luncheon we watched the clouds lift from the top of Mont Blanc, and we both agreed that its snows were not whiter than the bottom of our two hearts."

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What was the "general solution" upon which Herr Stresemann and M. Briand were agreed? That, as the latter said, is "the mystery of Thoiry." The MANCHESTER GUARDIAN's special correspondent at Geneva states explicitly that the agreement "covers the whole field of Franco-German relations," and provides:—

"(1) For speedy and total evacuation of the Rhineland.

"(2) Early restoration of the Saar territory to Germany.

"(3) The withdrawal of Allied military control in return for—

"(4) Immediate monetary help to France through mobilization of the railway debentures and a recasting of the Dawes scheme.

"(5) The repurchase of the Saar mines.

"(6) The satisfaction of the remaining exigencies of France in the matter of disarmament and Germany's consent to a rather stricter League control than she was obliged to admit."

This is indeed a comprehensive programme, which would go far towards establishing Franco-German relations on a durable basis; and it is easy to believe that it was along these lines that the two Ministers discoursed.

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It remains to be seen in what shape M. Briand's proposals will emerge from the French Cabinet. MM. Barthou, Bokanowski, Tardieu, and Louis Marin are said to be definitely opposed to any such general settlement with Germany, and it is impossible to believe that M. Poincaré himself would welcome it. On the other hand, if M. Briand were to resign on a broad issue of foreign policy it is at least probable that M. Herriot, M. Painlevé, and other Ministers of the Left would go with him, bringing the Poincaré Government to an end. This might be the happiest solution from the international standpoint, for another Briand Government, with or without M. Caillaux, would be the most likely successor of the present coalition. But Frenchmen, remembering the prolonged crisis which preceded this Ministry, would naturally shrink from precipitating another; and compromise along the lines of doing little but keeping a friendly tone towards Germany seems the most likely outcome. At the very least, it is a healthy sign that the entry of Germany into the League should be followed so promptly by a heart-to-heart talk between the two Foreign Ministers.

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Geneva has done the expected thing in reference to the United States and the World Court, the Juridical Committee having passed its decisions on to the plenary conference for acceptance. Six of the eight reservations passed by the American Senate are accepted *in toto*. To the fourth it adds a qualifying clause providing for a right of withdrawal, by a two-thirds majority of the signatory States, from the acceptance of special conditions imposed by the United States. On the fifth reservation, involving an American veto on Advisory Opinions, and the only one of real consequence, it is proposed that the United States should exercise all the rights enjoyed by members of the League Council, their exercise being made in each case the subject of "an understanding arrived at by the Government of the United States and the Council of the League." This document makes the result a foregone conclusion. Nothing more can be heard of the entry of the United States into the World Court. The Senate reservations were in the nature of an ultimatum. They were to be taken as they stand or left; Washington will not bargain. Senators who voted for the World Court resolution are now facing their constituents in fear. The adhesion of the United States to the Court, as Professor Noel Baker recently showed in *THE NATION*, would not be important in itself; but the failure of the present effort will be a bitter blow to that great body of American citizens who have worked devotedly, and against every discouragement, to bring the United States back into the family of nations. They will be thrown into despair.

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We comment in a leading article on the otiose offer which the Government submitted last week-end to the Miners' Federation. It was a foregone conclusion that the miners' executive, when it met last Tuesday, would reject this proposal. The only question was whether they would leave the matter there or make some further overtures. It appears that the latter course was decided upon after a protracted meeting. Publicly, the executive confined themselves to the issue of a well-drafted reply to Mr. Baldwin, which, while stating forcibly but unprovocatively the reasons which made the Government's offer unacceptable, expressed the hope that "even now . . . wiser counsels may prevail," and reiterated the Federation's readiness to negotiate "a new national agreement with a view to a reduction in labour costs to meet the immediate necessities of the industry." Privately, they followed this up by requesting a further conference with Ministers; and discussions

have been taking place, lasting late into the night, as to the tenor of which no public statement has yet been issued.

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It seems clear, however, that the miners have, for the first time, made various definite and detailed offers. They have suggested a return to work on the basis of the 1921 Agreement, *i.e.*, a reduction of 10 per cent. in wages, with the retention of the seven-hour day. This, our readers will remember, was essentially what we suggested in the early weeks of the strike as a solution which the Government might enforce by legislation. But this is clearly no longer practical politics. Alternatively, the miners seem to have proposed that the Coal Commission should be reconstituted to arbitrate on the dispute. But the Government no longer dissembles its distrust of that body; and, on the whole, though there is always hope while there is negotiation, the chances do not seem good that anything will emerge from the discussions now in progress. The congenital inability of Mr. Herbert Smith to make a move until it is too late is matched by a similar inability on Mr. Baldwin's part to take the sort of decisive action required to make good his "square deal" pretensions. He seems to labour under the delusion that he can fulfil his rôle of impartial benevolence by speaking nicely to both sides; he cannot grasp that it is of the essence of the rôle that he should act authoritatively, and if need be unpleasantly.

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The result of the North Cumberland by-election is interesting in several respects. The figures are as follows:—

Graham (C.)	...	...	8,867
Holt (L.)	...	...	6,871
McIntyre (Lab.)	...	...	2,798

Compared with the General Election, the Conservative vote is down by over 1,700; the Liberal is 50 up, and Labour is 668 up. It is clear that if there had been no Labour candidate, Mr. Holt would have been returned. It is also clear that in this type of rural constituency Labour stands no chance whatever of winning. The circumstances were peculiarly favourable for Labour at this election. The tide had been flowing strongly in their direction at N. Hammersmith and Wallsend; the Government was cutting a sorry figure over the Coal Dispute throughout the campaign; the Liberals are disunited, and though Mr. Holt is a man of exceptional ability and experience, he stands for the Ernest Benn type of Liberalism and his criticisms of the Government's coal policy were indistinguishable from those of the coal-owners. It was thus open to Labour canvassers to say, with plausibility, that there was nothing to choose between Tories and Liberals, at a time when Toryism was showing its worst characteristics. Nevertheless, if the Liberal Party had been united, North Cumberland would have been won, in spite of Labour opposition. As things are, Captain Graham has the satisfaction of sitting for the constituency by a minority vote, with the knowledge that when the Opposition really wants to turn out the Government he will lose his seat.

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The Agenda has now been issued for the annual conference of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations which will open at Scarborough on October 6th. At least 2,600 delegates are expected, and poor Mr. Baldwin is to address a mass meeting at the Futurist Cinema (that is indeed its name), which will be broadcast to two other gatherings. On this occasion, as Mr. Baldwin is already being told by the Tory Press, he must explain what the Government is

going to do to restrict the powers of Trade Unions. No less than twelve resolutions have been put down on this subject, including one which

"regrets the apparent inability of the Government to appreciate the necessity of amending the laws governing trade unions."

This seems rather severe when it is remembered that Lord Birkenhead outlined some very drastic proposals at the last Council meeting of the National Union, but it is hardly likely that Mr. Baldwin will succeed in satisfying these delegates, for even in February, three months before the General Strike, the Council demanded "that steps should be taken to render all political action by trade unions illegal."

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Next to anti-union legislation, the subject upon which the Tory delegates feel most strongly is the reform of the House of Lords, by which they mean the restoration of its veto. Sir Robert Sanders is to move "that it would be advisable that a measure on the subject should be introduced next Session," and there are six other resolutions on the paper dealing with this topic. It must not, however, be supposed that the gathering will suffer from any lack of variety in the subjects raised; "the subversive activities of Soviet agents," British films, safeguarding and imperial preference, migration, study circles, the Philip Stott College, the abolition of war-time licensing restrictions, the flying of the Union Jack in every school, compulsory voting, and the desirability of selecting an official song for the Conservative Party, all figure on the Agenda. It should prove a lively gathering, but we greatly fear that our Laodicean Prime Minister will be out of his element there.

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Later accounts of the fighting on the Upper Yangtze indicate that it was of a more serious character than was at first supposed. According to one account, five thousand persons were killed as the result of the British bombardment of Wanhsien and the subsequent fires. Sir Ronald Macleay, the British Minister at Peking, has addressed a strong Note to the Chinese Foreign Office on the affair, in which he characterizes the action of Yang Sen in "seizing the British ships and posting armed soldiers on board who opened fire on the British gunboats" as "nothing less than piracy." To make these remarks in Peking appears, however, to be largely a matter of form, since we have already dealt with the incident on the spot and secured the release of the steamers "Wantung" and "Wanhsien" by means of naval demonstrations. Another development of considerable importance is the decision of the Canton Government to raise the boycott on British goods, while compensating the boycotters by means of additional import and export duties. The scale of the extra duties is in accordance with the Washington Agreement, so the British authorities should not have difficulty in assenting to them; but delicate questions may arise as to their collection, for the right of the *de facto* Canton Government to control customs has not hitherto been recognized.

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When John Morley was Secretary of State for India he made a point, on Indian Budget day in the House, of taunting "the great imperial party" with their unabashed indifference to the Empire. The attitude of the Conservative Party and Press to-day is not to be described as indifference, but rather as something like plain fear. The agenda paper of the forthcoming Imperial Conference is the convincing evidence of their

state of mind. If the Government and one or two Dominion Premiers can have their way, the Conference will spend so much of its energy as can be spared from social functions in discussing such things as cables, films, and wireless, and in steering clear of that batch of urgent problems which has brought a very serious cloud into the imperial sky. They are all related, more or less directly, to the central problem of dominion status and nationhood.

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The vigorous speculations as to the intentions of Mr. Mackenzie King in respect of the Imperial Conference are unnecessary and embarrassing. The simple fact is that Mr. King himself cannot know. The defeated Prime Minister withholds his resignation. Until he has formed his new Cabinet and seen how its members are likely to emerge from the re-election contests, Mr. King, obviously, will not be able to give attention to the important matter of Canada's representation at the Imperial Conference. It assembles in London on October 19th, which is an awkward date for the Canadian Government. The final figures of the election give the Liberals 118, with Conservatives 91, and Progressives 31. Mr. King, therefore, can count upon a working majority of at least forty. He will have, presumably, one or two good Progressives in his Cabinet, while his notable gains in Ontario and Manitoba will enable him to reduce the Quebec element, always the handicap of a Liberal Prime Minister of the Dominion. The destiny of Mr. Meighen is not yet determined. He may make the loss of his seat the occasion for retirement, but the Conservatives have no alternative leader in sight. Mr. Meighen is a man of good if rather narrow intelligence, and of sound public character. He has, however, a record of successive defeats, the Conservative Press is cool or hostile towards him, and he is grotesquely out of it in the Western Provinces.

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A veteran journalist writes: I cannot remember any great natural calamity of the past thirty years being treated by the London dailies in the manner deemed appropriate to the appalling Florida hurricane. The cables on Sunday were necessarily brief and contradictory, but by Monday night they were full and unmistakable. Tuesday's papers make a very curious study. The DAILY CHRONICLE printed the news of Florida on an inside sheet. The DAILY MAIL compared the bigness of the calamity with the bigness of the Dempsey-Tunney fight. The MORNING POST was moved to compose a leader on the happy moderation of the English climate—"at its worst we would not change it." Several important papers gave double-column prominence to the thunderstorms in the North of England, while giving a minor place to the desolation of Florida, one morning paper, honoured for its hostility to sensationalism, displaying as a broad headline the dreadful words, "Train Held Up." On this same day, again, Florida had vanished altogether from the new 24-page EVENING STANDARD. I raise the question, without trying to suggest an answer, whether the wide and deep feeling against the United States now prevailing in England would be likely in any way whatever to influence a London editor's estimate of news value in the presence of a terrible tragedy?

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Replies to the Questionnaire continue to reach us in considerable numbers, 120 having been received since the results were last tabulated. We shall not, however, publish further figures until the final results and analysis are given in our issue of October 16th. All replies received on or before October 11th will be included in the final count.

## A SILLY PLAN

NEVER before perhaps—not in our time certainly—has British statesmanship cut so pitiable a figure as it does in the singular document submitted last week-end by Mr. Baldwin to the Miners' Federation. A few weeks ago, Mr. Churchill was declaring in confident tones in the House of Commons, with reference to the issue of national *versus* district agreements:—

"Let the miners' leaders arm us with the weapons of economic truth, and we will see who in the name of procedure or formality presumes to stand in the path of a peaceful settlement."

Well, we now see. The owners, Mr. Baldwin regrets to inform Mr. Cook, "have now declined in the most emphatic manner to enter into any discussion with your Federation on the subject of hours and wages, or to make a national agreement with them." So that, unfortunately, is that. However he is authorized to assure the miners that "the coalowners in all districts are willing to observe the main principles that a national agreement would be designed to secure." Moreover he has an offer to make "out of a sincere desire to arrive at an early settlement."

What is this offer? If the miners will make district agreements with the owners, then, after they have all gone back to work, the Government will set up an Arbitration Tribunal with power to "confirm or modify" these agreements upon appeal. To this arrangement, there is a proviso which is significant rather than important. The right to appeal arises only when the district settlement includes a lengthening of hours.

Was there ever a plan so scatter-brained in conception? You can appeal against a decision; you can arbitrate about a dispute; but to invite people first to agree and then to appeal against the agreement to arbitration is to make nonsense of one or other of the words. Which of them is intended to be nonsense? Will the fact that the men have "agreed" to certain terms prejudice their case before the Tribunal? If so, this should be made clear. If not, what is the point of insisting on the preliminary unreal agreement? Why not get on with the arbitration straight away? It is idle to reply: "In order to obtain an immediate return to work." An arbitration tribunal could complete its task long before the miners will return to work on the basis of this incoherent plan.

But the proviso serves to explain the mentality which has concocted it. It is only if longer hours are agreed to that appeal can be made to the Tribunal. Why this limitation, somewhat academic surely, since the owners will nowhere be content with seven hours? Because, without this limitation, the scheme would admit the principle of the State regulation of wages, and to the Conservative Government this principle is tabu. On the other hand, Mr. Baldwin's conscience is uneasy about the Eight Hours Act. It might have been well, he feels, to attach conditions to it; and what he

now conceives himself as doing is to attach conditions retrospectively.

A bad conscience, manifesting itself in such thoroughly silly proposals, is about all that is left now of Mr. Baldwin's preaching of peace in industry, and his promises to ensure a "square deal."

## THE CLASS WAR

WE publish in our correspondence columns a letter from Mr. John Strachey in reply to our article of last week on "The Spiritual Servitude of the Labour Party." We propose to comment at length on the points which Mr. Strachey raises. We are moved to do so, not only by the desire we feel to respond to his courteous request for our opinion upon his attitude, but also by another consideration. Mr. Strachey's letter seems to us excellently fitted to point the moral which it is our object to drive home.

After arguing that the Labour Party requires of its adherents "a surrender of the right to the free expression of opinion such as has never before been demanded in Protestant Britain in the name of party loyalty," we declared ourselves "a little surprised that its members are not more irked than they appear to be" by this state of things. Mr. Strachey admits that the facts, as we stated them, are "undeniable," and he admits that we have reason to be puzzled. In fact, he is puzzled himself. He does not find the Labour discipline irksome; not in the least; on the contrary, he feels instinctively that it is "right, proper, and essential." But he "cannot help wondering" why he feels like this. He sets out in an introspective mood to offer us a tentative explanation, inviting us, in the same disinterested spirit of inquiry, to state whether we think his diagnosis is correct.

Well, we think that he has diagnosed quite correctly his own case and that of those who share his point of view. Mr. Strachey, as he explains, is one of those who see the problems of the modern world in terms of the class war of Marxian theory. He hopes that recourse to violence and bloodshed will not be necessary in this country; otherwise he sees eye to eye with his "Russian comrades." He believes that we are living in a perpetual state of war, or even, as he puts it, in a perpetual "state of siege"; and, so believing, he accepts and helps to impose on others a discipline which turns free expression into treason, as cheerfully as patriotic citizens in a beleaguered city submit to all manner of restraints on their accustomed liberties. Is not this, he asks, a "possible explanation" of his state of mind? Certainly it is. But let us assure Mr. Strachey at once that our perplexity did not extend to him. In his case we are puzzled only as to how he can seriously accept such premises. But, granting them, the ready submission to Labour's mental and spiritual chains follows consistently enough.

Our cap was designed to fit other heads. It is those who do not share Mr. Strachey's premises about the class war whom we should have expected to feel somewhat restive. Mr. Strachey tells us, indeed, that all members of the Labour Party accept these premises, the Right almost as much as the Left. But here, surely, he must have been writing somewhat carelessly. Does he seriously ask us

to believe that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Clynes, Lord Haldane, Lord Arnold, Lord Parmoor, to mention only a few prominent figures in the late Labour Government, are really disciples of Karl Marx, despite their emphatic declarations to the contrary? Or does he ask us to believe that these gentlemen grossly misrepresent the rank and file opinion of the Labour Party, of the Right section no less than of the Left? We cannot accept either of these propositions. On the contrary, we believe that the position in which a very large number of members of the Labour Party are placed, leaders and rank and file alike, is a fundamentally false one, into which they have drifted unknowingly; and we propose to interrupt for a moment our argument with Mr. Strachey in order to explain more fully what we mean.

A young man or woman with a social conscience and ideals is urged to join the Labour Party by some such appeal as this: "The present state of society is unjust and unsatisfactory in many ways. While some people are able to live in an idle luxury, which they have done nothing personally to deserve, large masses of others are confined to a narrow routine of dreary toil and stunted lives. Yet if we could only arrange things aright, the productive power of modern industry is so great that we might build up a far fairer and finer society which would bring the opportunity of a full, free life within the reach of all. That is our aim. Help us to realize it by joining us. The Conservative Party shows, every day more clearly, that its primary concern is to defend the interests of property against encroachment. For the sake of a lower income tax, it cuts down expenditure on the social services; and it will allow any reactionary body of employers to mismanage their industry to their heart's content. The Liberal Party is in confusion and has ceased to count. But we have both a clear aim, and a policy, which, though it may no doubt require to be worked out a bit more in detail, is none the less on the right lines. By Socialism, we mean using the power of the State to organize society for the general good. If you agree with us in this, have no hesitation about joining the Labour Party."

Now, suppose our young social enthusiast to respond to this appeal and join the Labour Party. A general strike is called, of which he may disapprove, strongly and deeply, quite consistently with a genuine desire for a radical re-casting of society. The miners cling to an impossible slogan, incompatible with the Report of the Royal Commission; and he may hold it to be urgently necessary, in the interests of the miners no less than of the community as a whole, to mobilize public opinion effectively behind an all-round acceptance of that Report. He may observe the building unions planting themselves, like any greedy "capitalist" interest, between the community and its need for houses. Let him attempt on any of these considerable public issues to exercise his British birthright of free speech, and what does he find? He is assailed at once with shrieks of "traitor" and "coward," persons as mild-mannered and soft-spoken as Mr. John Strachey leading the hue and cry. "Your views may be quite right," Mr. Strachey proceeds to explain in a more kindly vein; "but do you not see that you really must not express them? You have enlisted as a soldier in an army. You have taken service in a great class war; and you are subject to a strict, war-time, military discipline." In vain does our unhappy enthusiast protest that the idea of enlisting in a class war never entered his head when he joined the Labour Party. In vain does he look round for confirmation to the persuasive people like Mr. Ramsay MacDonald who prevailed on him to do so.

He finds that they have unobtrusively vanished from the scene.

They, poor fellows, are in precisely the same case themselves. They, too, were once eager young enthusiasts, who built up the Labour Party under the impression that they were creating a political party, and without a suspicion that they were organizing an army. They hardly know how it has come about that they must now cower before Mr. John Strachey and his like. What they did seemed at the time so very obvious and innocent. They wanted a new political party, because the Liberal Party seemed too much under the influence of *laissez-faire* ideas. And they wanted the House of Commons to become more truly representative of our social life by including a substantial element of trade-union leaders. Surely there was something to be said for both these purposes; and what more natural than to combine them and to take trade unionism as the foundation of their new party? Why should this have led them on into a position in which they are reviled as traitors, unless they play up to a conception of a class struggle which is utterly repugnant to them? It is hard lines, undeniably, all the harder because the real cause of the trouble is the success which their party has attained. So long as the Labour Party remained a small one, its interlocking with trade unionism involved no class war corollaries. But from the moment it attained the position of the second party in the State, while still retaining the jealous particularism of its early days and aspiring to oust Liberalism altogether from the field, the class-war idea forces itself forward as the easiest way of rationalizing an otherwise anomalous situation. If political controversy can rightly be reduced to a struggle between two parties, one of which is the mere Parliamentary spokesman of the organized industrial workers, surely, if we are to be consistent, we must pre-suppose that the Marxian class contest is the dominant fact in our national life.

But let us return to Mr. Strachey. He asks us to define our attitude to the class war. Is it not, he would say, a "fact"? Well, it is quite true, of course, that there is a perpetual latent antagonism between the "workers" and other classes, in the same sense that there is a perpetual latent antagonism between the townsman and the countryman, between "practical men" and "theorists," between "high-brows" and "low-brows," between "molly-coddles" and "red-bloods," even between men and women. We mean to indicate by these parallels that their points of view clash much more than interests do. The manual wage-earner, for example, has a deep-seated objection to a longer working week, which the middle-class person, by reason of his different manner of life, seems incapable of fully understanding. Such differences of outlook, as this instance shows, are important. The differences of interest, though much less serious, are important too. But the point at issue is whether the best means of reforming society is to exploit this antagonism, to inflame it to the utmost of our power, and to glorify it by all the idealizations traditionally employed to plaster over the naked hideousness of war. We do not think so, for reasons of which Mr. Strachey must be content just now with two, stated in short and summary form.

(1) The problems of to-day are, above all, problems of construction, and a war-psychology is incompatible with a constructive spirit. If you inhibit, as Mr. Strachey says you must, free expression of opinion, you will soon find (nothing is surer than this) that you have inhibited thought: and nothing but mischief can ever come from egging people on to hate and forbidding them to think.

(2) The potential strength of the "workers" is pathetically insufficient for the enterprise. Just as the outstanding political effect of the rise of the Labour Party has been to present Conservatism with an indefinite lease of power, so the only possible result, if Mr. Strachey and his friends were to succeed in giving the twist they wish to Labour policy, would be some sort of Fascist triumph. We reproduce for his consideration some words which we wrote just after the General Strike:—

"The 'bourgeoisie' beat the 'workers' in the general strike; if it came to real civil war, they would beat them at fighting too; and if the issue is really forced along these lines to the final destruction of the Liberal Party, they will beat them at the polling booths, first, last, and every time."

This does not overstate our firm conviction.

## THE FLORIDA DEVASTATION

**I**N the annals of the great natural calamities the hurricane which devastated Southern Florida on September 18th will have a place by itself. The vastness of the damage done is one reason for this, but a far more potent reason is the indescribable irony of the disaster. It has fallen upon America's favoured peninsula at the close of a period during which a great outpouring of constructive energy had been combined with a frenzy of speculation to create a glorious land of business and pleasure, aided by a more extravagant use of the craft of publicity than has hitherto been employed for any purpose whatsoever. There are thus two sides to the terrible interest of the event—the range and character of the ruin, and its inevitable, and shattering, effect upon the emotion of the American people.

It is not possible at the time of writing for an estimate of the amount of destruction to be attempted. The hurricane, as is usual in that region, swept over from the West Indies. Its worst fury seems to have been spent on the Atlantic seaboard of Florida, along the one hundred miles or more of coast to the south of Palm Beach. But it would seem to have struck with great force many places in the interior of the peninsula, along the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico, and far inland towards the Middle-Western States. The surprising new city of Miami, together with Miami Beach, is in great part destroyed. A similar fate has overtaken the line of pleasure resorts and specially designed residential settlements that sprang up along the shore during the progress of the recent land boom, especially after 1924—Hollywood, Coral Gables, Fort Lauderdale, and the rest, with their luxurious hotels, clubs, pleasure palaces, and private houses. Palm Beach, the millionaires' special preserve, seems to have escaped the worst, but West Palm Beach, the neighbouring commercial town, has suffered heavily. Lake Okeechobee, a large tract of water behind Palm Beach, burst its banks and submerged several of the adjacent towns. Of the terror in Miami the cable dispatches give only a faint indication. The combination of flood and rocking buildings cannot have fallen short of the most terrifying earthquake experiences. The dispatches are contradictory. Some describe the overthrow of the greater part of the large block buildings; others appear to indicate that the great masses of modern steel construction proved strong enough to withstand the tornado. Magnificent new highways were flooded and torn up, and the hurricane appears to have been equally fatal to the shipping in the harbours and to the immense citrus crops of Southern Florida, chiefly oranges and grape fruit. It is clear that none of the published estimates of the loss of life can be of any value. Statements are now being circulated to the

effect that the total death-roll is under one thousand; but correspondents who repeat the small conjectural figures go on to describe an "endless repetition" of distressing scenes throughout the ruined towns "of children searching for their parents, parents for their children." Such scenes as those in "endless repetition" do not occur in ruined towns, the largest of which had a population of over one hundred thousand, when the victims over a vast field of devastation number only a few hundreds. The conclusion is unavoidable that the American Press, in pursuit of a policy requiring no explanation, will strive earnestly to convince the world that the disaster in Florida is measurable in extent and by no means irreparable. The most remarkable, and most truly characteristic, aspect of it is the magnificent energy of the national relief, so instant and generous that in all probability there will hardly be a sufferer undeterred by the time this article is in print.

There is no parallel to the story of Florida as a State systematically boomed according to the intensive method. Some forty years ago the possibilities of the peninsula as a fruit-growing country were made known, and for some time it held attractions for English settlers. The movement, however, was not permanent, and, by one of those curious turns of fortune which can obliterate the most obvious facts, the splendour of the Florida climate was not revealed to the American public until the present decade. A minority of the very rich were aware of it as a winter playground, and a few of them had built houses at Palm Beach long before the seasonal migration began. Then came one of the incidental consequences of the War. Europe was closed to the American visitor. Winter on the Riviera became an impossibility. Rich Americans, and more particularly those made suddenly rich, were driven back upon the resources of their own country. They made discoveries the effects of which did not end with the War. The boom of Southern California began and was carried to extravagant lengths until 1923. Then California was overtaken by Florida. The climate of the south-eastern peninsula was declared to be superior even to that of the Pacific coast. Its geographical position was more favourable. The journey to Miami from Chicago or St. Louis is much shorter than the journey to Los Angeles. And, notwithstanding the swamps of the great Everglades tract, it was found that development in Florida was a relatively simple affair. There was no limit to the funds available for investment, and in the meantime the science of publicity had been expanded beyond the dreams even of post-war advertisers. Not even modern America had seen anything in the way of advertisement that could be spoken of in the same breath with the continental display of the waterfronts of Coral Gables and Miami. The result, in outline, is known to everybody: the gigantic boom of 1924-25, the making of highways, the magical building of towns and pleasure places; the collapse in values last winter, and the feverish efforts towards readjustment which had been going on for eight or nine months when the doom fell upon the State a week ago.

Here, then, is the aspect of the calamity upon which, we may be sure, the collective mind of the American public will be led by its mentors, lay and clerical, to dwell when the immediate horror of the event has passed from the news. Florida has been swept by a great wind of destruction after a short period of expansion on a scale never before approached in any part of the world. Its pride of prosperity and achievement had been unlimited. It was literally a paradise of riches and irresponsibility. Its legislators had given it a place apart among the States of the American Union by providing, through the State Constitution itself, a perpetual immunity from taxes on income and inheritance. During the two years of the land boom Florida became a synonym for the trinity of unbounded wealth, indul-

gence, and fashionable lawlessness. The Sunday papers, the pulpit, and the films co-operated to impress the simple public with a frightening sense of its luxury and licence. No one pretended that the Prohibition law had any validity in Florida. The dwellers in Main Street were persuaded that this marvellous pleasure-ground was the home of everything that was designed to nullify the sound old American tradition of puritanism, hard labour, and good grey living: although, it should be observed, Main Street was sending an ever-increasing contingent of its sons and daughters to the new land of idleness and indulgence. Accordingly, we can hear without difficulty the grave morals that will be drawn in every pulpit of America on the Sundays of this autumn; and no one will deny that the evangelical homilists are provided with a text of extraordinary impressiveness. Indeed, it may be agreed that no modern experience of calamity—from the earthquake of Lisbon which moved Voltaire, to the earthquakes of San Francisco and Tokio—has furnished so overwhelming a reminder as this of the one certain truth, that the fashion of this world passeth away.

## THE CRISIS IN FRENCH SOCIALISM

THE present crisis in the French Socialist Party is not peculiar to Socialism in France. All the parties affiliated to the Second International on the Continent are in a similar case. Either they have ceased to be Socialist in everything but name, as in Poland and Bulgaria, or they are torn by dissensions. The Second International has never recovered from its attitude during the war, and, in my opinion, never will. I am far from thinking that political parties should have rigid dogmas rigidly applied without regard to the conditions existing at the moment. A political party cannot, however, with impunity act in flagrant contradiction with its essential ideas, as the Second International did during the war. What it should have done is plain. When war broke out, delegates from every affiliated Socialist Party should at once have assembled in some neutral country and sat there in permanence with the sole purpose of trying to end the war by concerted action on the part of Socialists in all countries, neutral and belligerent. That, no doubt, was what Jaurès meant when he impressed on M. Camille Huysmans, at the time of his election as secretary of the Second International, the immense responsibility of his position. If a European war broke out, Jaurès said, all the Socialist leaders, including himself, might be carried away, but M. Huysmans must stand firm and keep the International going in spite of them. M. Huysmans did nothing of the kind.

Socialism, in fact, went bankrupt in the war, and the present lamentable condition of the Continental Socialist Parties is the result. And, by their action since the war ended, those parties have shown that they have in fact, however unconsciously, abandoned the traditional principles of Socialism. If anybody wants a striking example of Socialist inconsistency he has only to read a little book written by M. Emile Vandervelde, with the title "Le Socialisme contre l'Etat," and then compare what M. Vandervelde there says with his political action during the war. The conduct of the leaders of the Second International during the last twelve years can be justified only on the ground that Socialism as hitherto understood won't work. If that is so, they should frankly say so, and try to find a substitute that will work.

In France, the Socialist Party was plunged into chaos on the eve of the war by the murder of M. Jaurès, the effect of whose disappearance showed that he was in fact the French Socialist Party. In spite of the fact that Jaurès was a great orator, he was a very great man—perhaps the only really great statesman that the Third Republic has produced. He had the foresight of a great statesman. He foretold in 1887, before he became a Socialist, that the Franco-Russian alliance would drag France into the next European war, which would be caused by a quarrel between Russia and Austria about the Balkans. From the moment when M. Poincaré became Prime Minister in 1912, Jaurès saw the war coming, and never ceased to warn his fellow-countrymen that M. Poincaré's policy was making war inevitable. They refused to listen to him, and he lived just long enough to know that his prophecy had been fulfilled.

Left without the guidance of Jaurès, the French Socialists, when the war broke out, behaved like a sheepless flock of sheep. They rallied as one man to the "national defence," and, as is the way of converts, they exaggerated. Men like Jules Guesde and Vaillant vied in the ardour of their patriotism with Maurice Barrès, and came to believe that, as Gassier made Vaillant say to Keir Hardie in a cartoon suppressed by the censor, "la guerre n'est mauvaise qu'en temps de paix." This was to some extent a reversion to type. Up to the last decade of the nineteenth century, when the Dreyfus Affair had provoked an anti-militarist movement and the influence of such men as Anatole France, Jaurès and Zola began to make itself felt, French opinion of the Left had been Chauvinist ever since the Revolution, which, as Anatole France always said, created French Nationalism. It was a pseudo-revolutionary Chauvinism, which identified France with the cause of liberty, and was always demanding war on the pretext of overthrowing tyranny in other countries. Louis-Philippe had to contend with it, Napoleon III. profited by it, as his uncle had, and it was one of the factors in the Paris Commune. The older Socialists, especially when, like Vaillant, they had been Communards in 1871, had, therefore, no difficulty in rallying to the "guerre du droit," which was going to destroy tyranny, abolish militarism, diffuse liberty and democracy all over the world, and establish perpetual peace—all of which blessings were to be secured automatically by the defeat of Germany.

Early in the war, however, some of the members of the French Socialist Party began to remember that they were Socialists. The result was the minority movement, which ultimately won over the majority of the party at the famous national congress in 1917, which decided in favour of an international conference after hearing the report of the delegates returned from Russia. I was, I think, the only representative of the Press, and the only person not a delegate present at that congress, and I well remember the enthusiasm of the crowd on the Place de la République when the result of the vote was announced by Jean Longuet. For the first time since the beginning of the war the Internationale was sung in a public place in Paris. Thanks to the Allied Governments and the weakness of the Socialist leaders in the Allied countries, the proposed Stockholm conference was suppressed, and, in France, Socialist opposition was silenced by the Clemencist reign of terror until the end of the war. After the war ended, the internal conflict in the Socialist Party continued, and ended in the capture by the Communists of the party organization and its central organ in the Press, *L'HUMANITÉ*. The minority reorganized themselves on the old lines, and the new Socialist Party was affiliated to the Vienna International, popularly known as the Two and a

Half, until the latter was merged in the old Second International. The result of the fusion in France, as in Germany, has been that the spirit of the Second International has prevailed, and many of the former "minoritaire" leaders have become even more imbued by it than some of their former opponents. Probably the formation of the Vienna International will be recorded in history as the last struggle for life of a moribund movement.

French Trade Unionism has passed through the same phases as French Socialism. Before the war the Trade Unions were not, as in Germany, allied to the Socialist Party. On the contrary, their official doctrine was Revolutionary Syndicalism, and their leaders were always at war with the Socialists, whom they denounced as politicians. The Trade Unions were officially opposed to any political action and advocated "direct action," especially the general strike, as the only method of securing the aims of labour. They never ran candidates for Parliament or for any local body, and theoretically their members were supposed to abstain from voting in all elections, but in fact most of them voted Socialist, although there were always a certain number of abstentionists. The federal Trade Union organization—the C. G. T.—was before the war rather a revolutionary General Staff than a Trade Union organization properly so-called. No attempt was made to enrol all the workmen in the Unions, for it was held that everything could and should be done by a "minorité consciente et agissante." Unfortunately whenever an attempt was made to do anything it resulted in disastrous defeat.

At the outbreak of the war the great majority of the Trade Union leaders became as tame and as patriotic as the Socialists, but there was a minority movement from the first, led by Merrheim, whose brain gave way under the terrible strain of those four years and the persecution to which he was subjected. Hence his otherwise unaccountable conduct after the war and his unhappy end. I was in the closest contact with him during the war, and I never met a more disinterested, more courageous, or finer character. In the C.G.T., as in the Socialist Party, the "minoritaires" were the majority before the end of the war, but, after it ended, there was a reconciliation between the leaders of the two tendencies which, instead of preserving the unity of the French Trade Union movement, led to its disruption. The old C.G.T., while it has not formally disclaimed its former tenets and methods, has in fact abandoned them, and now works on lines very much like those of the English Trade Unions in the old days before they went into political action. All the revolutionary elements have seceded from it and formed separate unions allied to the Communist Party with a federal organization known as the C.G.T.U.—Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire—so called no doubt because it destroyed the unity of the Trade Union movement. In Germany the Communists were prevented by Moscow from making the same blunder. The leaders of the C.G.T.U. are mostly Revolutionary Syndicalists, Anarchists, or Libertarians of one kind or another—anything in fact except Communists. The only attractions for them of the Communist Party are its revolutionary methods and anti-parliamentarism. There have more than once been difficulties between the C.G.T.U. and the Communist Party, and I doubt whether their alliance can be permanent.

Such was the position of the French Labour movement when the Cartel des Gauches was formed for the general election of 1924. Many Socialists, probably the majority, went into the Cartel unwillingly, but there was in fact no alternative to a Cartel with the Radicals except that of forming one with the Communists. The preposterous electoral system would have made another victory of the Bloc

National almost inevitable, had all the parties of the Left run separate lists. It was clearly understood before the election that the Socialists did not bind themselves to support any and every Government of the Left that might be formed, still less to take part in a Coalition Cabinet. The Cartel was formed in the first place for electoral purposes.

After the victory of the Cartel the Socialists were faced with the question whether or not they should join in a Coalition Cabinet representing all the sections of the Cartel. On this question there was a sharp division of opinion in the party which has since become more and more acute, until at present it threatens the party unity. For my part I do not see how the Socialist Party could give any but a negative reply to that question without committing political suicide. I quite understand the attitude of the Radicals, who blame the Socialists for the break-up of the Cartel. The arrangement by which the Socialists in fact shared the power and their allies had all the responsibility was not an agreeable one for the latter. But I doubt whether the Cartel would have lasted any longer, had the Socialists been in the Government. It might even have come to grief sooner. It was sufficiently compromising for the Socialists to continue their support to a Prime Minister whose levity was to a great extent responsible for the Moroccan war, and who could make such a speech as that about Germany made by M. Herriot in the Chamber in January of last year. Had there been Socialist Ministers on the latter occasion, they could hardly have refrained from resigning. The subsequent conduct of the Radical Party, and M. Herriot in particular, has fully justified the Socialist refusal. It is difficult to co-operate with a jelly-fish.

Nevertheless, there might have been a majority among the Socialist deputies for "participation," but for fear of the Socialist electors. In the French, as in the German, Socialist Party the parliamentary leaders are to a great extent out of touch with the workmen, the majority of whom have retained the revolutionary tradition. In Paris the majority of the workmen have already deserted the Socialist Party for the Communist. Had the Socialists formed a Coalition Government with "bourgeois" parties, they would have lost most of the workmen throughout France that still support them. The Communist advice to the Socialists to take that step was not perhaps entirely disinterested.

A split in the French Socialist Party is becoming more and more likely, and perhaps it is to be desired. The dispute about "participation" is only a symptom of a profound divergence. The Socialist Party is in fact already two parties, one of which consists of Radicals of the Left and the other of Communists of the Right, and these two parties will never dwell together in unity. It is no longer even predominantly a workmen's party. I was at a French Socialist congress last year and was struck by the marked difference between its composition and that of the Socialist congresses that I had attended in the past. There was scarcely a workman among the delegates. While the Socialists have lost to the Communists, especially in Paris, which always goes to extremes on both sides, they have gained from the Radicals, and have a strong and increasing hold on the small bourgeoisie. Many of the Socialist electors are not Socialists and care nothing about Socialist tradition. They vote Socialist because the Socialist Party is the only organized party of the Left—except, of course, the Communist Party. The Radical Party, like most French parties, is not a real party, but a shifting rabble without discipline and without cohesion. If the Socialist Party split, its Right wing would no doubt actually, if not at once nominally, unite with the really Radical elements in the Radical Party, and the result might be a

disciplined and organized non-revolutionary party of the Left, which would attract the small bourgeoisie and some of the workmen, without alienating the peasants. The Left wing would no doubt for the present at any rate remain a separate party from the Communists, but would certainly try to form a "united front" with them, and that would involve certain concessions on the part of the Communists. The more sensible people have recently been getting the upper hand in the French Communist Party—*L'HUMANITÉ* has improved and no longer attributes bad weather and railway accidents to capitalism. A *rapprochement* between Socialists and Communists could not fail to strengthen this tendency.

The Radical and Communist Parties are both weak in men of ability, whereas the level of political ability in the Socialist Party is higher than in any other party in France. For this reason, too, such a development as I have mentioned would have advantages. It does not, of course, follow that it will happen, but, as I have said, conditions seem to point to something like it. If the discordant elements in the Socialist Party continue to try to maintain a merely external unity, the party will continue to be ineffective, and the gainers will be the reactionaries on one side and the Communists on the other.

ROBERT DELL.

## LIFE AND POLITICS

WHAT is to be the fate of the Liberal Party? No one knows even now whether the healing silence about personalities which all reasonable men desire is to be granted to us. Lord Oxford is to speak in Scotland next month. If, as prophets of evil predict, he gives the door another slam in the interests of personal consistency, then the outlook will be black indeed. In that case I expect to see something like a crumbling away of the fighting organization in the country. Some candidates will give it all up in disgust, and small blame to them. If, on the other hand, the Montagus and Capulets agree that there has been enough flourishing of swords to satisfy honour—if, in short, everyone will only keep quiet and get on with the job, then things will have a chance of righting themselves in the actual business of fighting reaction from day to day as it takes some fresh form in Parliament. So may it be.

I don't see much hope myself in the ingenious plan put forward in the *TIIMES* by Lord Doverdale—better known as Mr. Oswald Partington. This notion of leaving Liberal policy to be settled by a conference composed of equal numbers of Asquithians and Lloyd Georgians with Lord Grey as "impartial" chairman, is popular among club politicians, but there is little to be said for it. Such a conference would be a Stepney wheel on the motor-car. The Liberal Federation, a democratic and inclusive body, has the job of settling policy for the party. The Federation is, or should be, the place for the rival sections to work out solutions. If the conference were to deal with urgent Parliamentary questions as they arise, then again it would interfere unnecessarily with the Parliamentary Party meetings, which exist for the purpose. There might be something to be said for a conference of the two sides under a chairman who is above the battle. Lord Grey is notoriously an Oxford partisan, and there is not the least hope of Mr. Lloyd George accepting him as neutral, which he is not. Lord Reading, who has been suggested for the post, is a more reasonable nomination. To suggest Lord Grey is to kill the project at birth. The case does not seem to me to call for these artificial remedies. What is wanted is a truce

to personal polemics and mutual tolerance among those leaders who cannot pretend to mutual cordiality. I agree with the view which Mr. Lloyd George is said to have expressed, that the alternative is twenty years of Tory Government.

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Talking of a conference of the two followings, it is worth while asking what about the Parliamentary Party? Is not that an existing conference, not only of Oxfordians and Lloyd Georgians, but of every shade of Liberal? A statistical friend has analyzed it for me, and reports that the party consists of "three bakers' dozens." One, composed of Tory-Liberals, has recently shed Sir Alfred Mond and some others like him. Another bakers' dozen is made up of ex-Coalition Liberals, but still Liberals. The third is composed of Oxfordian and Lloyd Georgian Liberals—and Radicals. Nothing could be more representative than such a mixture. Looking at the situation as it affects Mr. Lloyd George personally, we get this paradoxical result. The Radicals, who politically with him, are personally against him, the ex-Coalitionists who are personally with him, are, on the whole, politically against him, hating as they do his leaning towards an understanding with moderate or Radical Labour. No doubt Mr. Lloyd George calculates upon carrying with him in the actual day-by-day struggle in the House a sufficient following of Liberals of all brands to keep the party alive and growing until better days. He is told by Lord Doverdale and others to give away his fund and scrap his organization as an earnest of peace. This is asking too much from anybody—even the most blameless Radical of the most untainted past. It will be time to talk about the danger of the fund when it is being used for non-Liberal purposes, and not, as is surely the case at present, to keep alive policies—on coal, land, and now on inquiry towards an industrial policy—of which all manner of Liberals approve.

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The "National League of Liberal Trade Unionists," which was formally and completely established last Saturday, may seem a rather grandiose project. But something had to be done if the large number of Liberals in the trade unions are to be saved from losing all interest in their party or apathetically following up their reluctantly subscribed money with their votes. The latter is not a fantastic idea. Liberal canvassers have been told by trade union voters, "I would rather vote Liberal, but you see we chaps have paid for a union candidate." Naturally the central point of debate was the political levy. The Welsh delegates wanted to alter the law in an interesting way. They proposed that a man should have the right in paying his levy to earmark it for trade union candidates of his own party, which might be Liberal or even Conservative. A piquant proposal, and there is something to be said for it, especially as there are probably more Liberal trade unionists in Wales than in any other area.

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I was looking through Mr. Jerome K. Jerome's memoirs the other day and reflecting on the worn subject of the tyranny of the public over its favourite entertainers. The name Jerome connotes in ninety minds out of a hundred "Three Men in a Boat" and nothing else. That piece of romping fun was written many years ago when its author was a raw clerk beginning authorship. It is not at all surprising to find that its genial farce is not in the least expressive of the mature man. The professional humorist is usually a serious, even a sad, person; his dealings with his public do not conduce to a light-hearted estimate of humanity. One is prepared for this, but it was a little startling all the same to discover that the real Mr. Jerome K. Jerome takes an almost Swiftian view of mankind.

There is a touch of wild indignation about his comments on the people who made the war and ruined the peace. It must be galling to a serious-minded man to be imprisoned in a gilded cage by the public. He regards himself perhaps as a modern Isaiah, but all that is asked of him is an after-dinner jest.

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Paris is suffering the same process of mechanization (ugly word!) as London. When I was there a few days since after an absence of some years I deplored the disappearance of the little horse cabs that used simultaneously to crawl and to dance on the torrent of faster traffic. We hear much in London of the perils of the streets, but after all our "bobby" is a stern fellow and efficient at his job of conducting the orchestral strand. In Paris the streets are a wild whirl of motor traffic, and the taxis rush round the corners with truly Gallie fury, only saved from disaster by the driver's wonderful power of stopping dead. Otherwise the mere pedestrian would stop dead. At some of the wildest spots, such as the Champs Elysées, they have constituted definite crossing places for walkers, but these are none too safe. A monotony of speed and system seems to be banishing much of the old queer characterful life. The theatres are engaging in a competitive race of nudity. The word "nu" assails the eye in tiresome repetition from every hoarding, with the result that even the most naively adventurous of tourists loses all interest in the subject. I endured one of these undressed revues at Montmartre. It was slick and speedy, like everything in Paris, but the chief attraction, that everlasting "nu," was singularly uninteresting. Paris should now try the effect of Mid-Victorian costumes and hold a competition for the most completely dressed revue. Women's costumes imitated from ancient Crete are overdone.

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It becomes clear as the Royal Commission proceeds that, without a traffic bridge at Charing Cross, Waterloo Bridge is doomed. The practical reasons against the old bridge—that splendid bottleneck—are overwhelming unless a new way across the river is opened at Charing Cross. A fine bridge at Charing Cross has been the dream of London's lovers as long as I can remember. The railway company will not consent to cart its ignoble station across the Thames, and I have no doubt that the opposition of property will continue to count for more than the desires of all the beauty lovers and lovers of getting home quickly combined. Lord Crawford, whose plea for Waterloo Bridge was a notable performance, called Charing Cross railway bridge "heartless." Chivalry compels me to put in a word for the poor old thing. In the old days when Charing Cross station was the gateway of the world, the trains sailed away over the heads of the crowd and over the broad river bound for strange lands. The bridge was then the most romantic of bridges in its associations. The glory of Charing Cross has gone, and it is now little more than a suburban station, and as such is of dwindling usefulness. The tubes are fast taking over from the railways the job of transporting City workers to and from South London. The station bridge now serves the function chiefly of holding up a splendid piece of town-planning, which incidentally would save the life of the bridge at Waterloo.

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I made a tour of exploration of the new tube to Morden and admired especially the architecture of the stations. It is a refreshing departure from the usual lavatory style in crudely coloured terra-cotta, which glares in the street like a bad deed in a decent world. The combine has had the sense to see that it pays to employ a good architect who knows a good opportunity when he sees it. The tube can never be anything but a glorified rabbit warren, but there

is no reason why it should not put a good face on it when it comes to the surface. I calculate this tube goes half the way to Epsom. Ingenious persons in the papers are seeking for an appropriate name. Why not the Derby Tube?

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From the *Times* notice of Mr. Phillpotts' new comedy: "The father, described by one of his daughters as 'the kind of man who always forgets the nasty things about people,' was well played by Mr. William Pringle." Can this be Mr. W. R. M. Pringle burying the hatchet?

KAPPA.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### "THE SPIRITUAL SERVITUDE OF THE LABOUR PARTY"

SIR,—In your leading article, under the above title, you awaken, as you often do, many self-questionings in any sincere member of the Labour Party.

The facts, as you state them, are of course undeniable. Membership of the Labour Party should imply membership of that vaguer but far more important thing which you call the Labour Movement. And membership of the Labour Movement does, undoubtedly, entail the acceptance of a discipline, both of public statement and action, much more rigid than that required by some other political parties. As you say, we consider any Labour man who, publicly and "in the face of the enemy," attacks, or even criticizes severely, the actions of a political or Trade Union leader, or who denies an officially accepted party principle, to be a traitor and a coward.

I cannot help wondering why it is that, admitting all this, I, for one, not only do not deprecate it, but, instinctively, feel it right, proper and essential to the movement. You yourself, I notice, express mild surprise that more members of the Labour Movement do not find this discipline irksome. This suggests that my own instinctive attitude is a fairly general one. What is the explanation? Are we all of a particularly servile type of mind? You say that the reverse would seem to be the case. But is there not, at any rate, one apparently simple explanation of the difficulty?

The Labour Movement believes, rightly or wrongly, that it is engaged in a mighty conflict with the persons and forces at present dominant in society. It believes that the working class will only improve their material position, or acquire control over their conditions of life, by the intense and successful prosecution of this conflict. We in this country still believe, to the derision of our Russian comrades, that this conflict can be kept within the limits of peaceful political and industrial action, as we in this country know them. But none the less we all, right wing almost as much as left, realize that we are waging a war, and that we can only win by the power, unity, and enthusiasm of our own forces. Does not this sense of perpetual conflict offer a real explanation of the discipline required by the Labour Movement?

You do not accuse a lieutenant of servility for obeying the orders of his captain, even when he thinks those orders mistaken. But does not the military metaphor in itself explain the acceptance of Labour's discipline by many pretty independently minded men? Surely their presence in the Labour Party does something to show that its discipline is a necessity of war. That war necessitates the suppression of perfect freedom of expression is one of its worst aspects. But this is only another reason for our intense desire to end this class war, in the only way in which we believe it can be ended, that is, by the satisfaction of the elementary demands of the workers.

Moreover, it should be remembered that unlike an army the Labour Party has of all political parties by far the most developed and democratic a constitution, by means of which an individual or group can affect party decisions and policies. It is only after the decision has been made, by the extremely democratic party conference, that we expect our members to abide by it, until their next opportunity for seeking to reverse it comes round.

A working-class party in the present state of society feels itself in a constant state of siege. To exist at all, it *must be* a united, disciplined, force. Of course, you may tell us that we are only suffering from persecution mania. That there is really no conflict at all. That all the workers need to improve their lot is a little clear thinking on the problems of industrial and financial organization. That the mine-

owners would soon be induced to give a living wage and a seven-hours shift to the miners, if only Cook, instead of fighting them, would explain to them the disastrous effect of the return to the gold standard, and the advantages of selling agencies.

Perhaps. But we think otherwise; and that may explain why we do not feel our "spiritual servitude."

However, I only offer this explanation as a possible one. And I should be deeply interested to hear whether you consider it to be the correct one. Is it too much to ask that some day **THE NATION** will give us its considered view of the conflict of class? To Socialists it always seems a strange anomaly that it does not turn those same splendid powers of scientific analysis which it devotes to economics on to this, for us, the central social phenomenon of our time.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN STRACHEY.

[We reply to this letter in a leading article.—ED., **NATION**.]

### DISTRICT SETTLEMENTS

SIR,—I would like to congratulate you on the rare tolerance which, while strongly opposing the policy of district settlements, recognizes that the mineowners are not advocating it from mere greed or lust of power.

I think time will prove the mineowners right. District settlements do not mean "smashing the Federation." They do mean the effectual discrediting of the Federation's present leaders, and the return to a rational method of settling conditions in an industry where conditions vary so enormously. But it will still be open to the Federation to call out the men of any district which they feel has a genuine grievance, and to support them financially by levying on the remaining districts—a far more effectual method than the universal strike, and more congenial to a self-respecting people than begging in foreign countries for money.

The universal strike, ending invariably in failure and disaster, is not needed to obtain the redress of genuine grievance, but to coerce Parliament, to blackmail the Treasury, or to gratify the vanity of an Executive Committee.—Yours, &c.,

OSWALD EARP.

24, The Chase, S.W.4.  
September 15th, 1926.

### "ARBITRATE FIRST."

SIR,—The letters you have published on the "Arbitrate First" movement have been very useful and instructive. Mr. Peat's letter last week clears up one point of importance. For the signatories of the pledge, a breakdown, should it occur, of the procedure laid down in the Covenant would not justify a Government in having recourse to war. To secure their support, or rather to permit it, the Government must make further offers to conciliate. They must do so openly and clearly, and only if the other party to the dispute refuses these, and has recourse to war, would it be permissible (not obligatory) for the signatories to support their own Government in what would then be, clearly, a war of defence. It does not seem to me likely, as Mr. Aitken objects, that there would be obscurity or confusion on this particular point.

On the other hand, there is the possibility that troops might be advanced, during the dispute, to positions where there might be an incident that would precipitate a war, which each side might then say the other had provoked. This shows the importance of disarmament and also (in my judgment) of an adoption of such arrangements as were proposed in the Protocol to meet this situation. I believe, however, that, in spite of such possibilities, the signature of the pledge by a large number of people would be a real advance towards the prevention of war. It was certainly not my intention to belittle the many other efforts to which Mr. Aitken refers. The "Arbitrate First" plan is meant as a reinforcement, not a substitute for such efforts. Nor does it militate against those who believe in the absolute refusal to fight under all circumstances. What it does is to enable those who are willing to support a "defensive," but not an "offensive" war to take action on the lines of their own principle. The more discussion and criticism of the scheme the better. But I believe a sound kernel will be found to remain when all has been said.—Yours, &c.,

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

SIR,—Mr. Leonard Behrens is quite right. I did overlook the possibility that a majority report by a divided Council, under Article 15 of the Covenant, might be regarded as a League decision for the purposes of the "Arbitrate First" pledge. This, however, is the only kind of decision, if decision it can be called, in face of which the Covenant permits the unsuccessful party to appeal, in the last resort, to force. My main object was to point out that Mr. Lowes Dickinson was making a serious mistake in supposing, as he apparently did, that League decisions generally might lawfully be defied by any State which preferred to go to war. On this point I am glad to note that none of your correspondents supports Mr. Dickinson's reading of the Covenant.

While thanking Mr. Peat for his courteous reply to my letter, I cannot help thinking that he is, perhaps, inclined to run together two questions which are really distinct.

The first question is how far individuals can properly or usefully pledge themselves to withhold support from their Government in certain eventualities. On this point I need only remark that Mr. Peat has not, perhaps, considered the position of, for example, the hundreds of thousands of persons who (like myself) have made themselves liable for military service in case of emergency. It is one thing for such persons to use all their influence as citizens in favour of a pacific foreign policy. It is quite another thing for them to reserve the right to mutiny, in the event of the Government taking a course of which they personally disapprove. It is unnecessary to labour the point that though such pledges may have their uses, they are based on principles which may have far-reaching and rather awkward implications.

A second and quite separate question which arises is with regard to the substance of the pledge. There is a clear distinction between holding a Government to its well-defined obligations under the Covenant, and insisting on its exceeding them by complying with such further tests of pacific intentions as the conscience of the signatory may approve. There may quite conceivably be many people who would be prepared to commit themselves on the first point, but would hesitate to do so on the second. While the "Arbitrate First" pledge still seems to me to be rather loosely worded, Mr. Peat's letter clearly indicates that it cannot be conscientiously signed by anyone who is not prepared to support the Geneva Protocol. The "Arbitrate First" movement may, indeed, be not unfairly described as an attempt to force the Protocol on the British Government by something in the nature of direct action. There may quite possibly be something to be said for this, but it is clearly essential that we should know exactly what we are really being invited to do.—Yours, &c.,

LEONARD STEIN.

97, Lansdowne Road, W.11.  
September 21st, 1926.

### DARWIN AND SAMUEL BUTLER

SIR,—Mr. Jacobs complains that Professor Huxley chooses to ignore Samuel Butler. The majority of biologists attach far less weight to his arguments than to Darwin's, simply because they have found little support in sixty years of observation and experiment. On the other hand, natural selection has been shown to be causing evolution in several cases, and innumerable examples of effective artificial selection are known.

Darwin gave no explanation of the origin of variations: his successors have done so. Variation can readily be produced by suitable crossings, with more difficulty by physical or chemical stimuli. If those variations which occur "spontaneously," i.e., for unknown reasons, were of advantage to the species, it might be necessary to postulate an intelligent agent causing them. As they are almost invariably disadvantageous this necessity does not arise.

To my mind, however, the most cogent argument against a purposive power behind evolution possessing anything like human intelligence is the fact that if such a power exists it does not learn from its own mistakes.

In a number of animal groups, including the Ammonites and many extinct vertebrates, numerous different families have independently and successively evolved along similar lines which invariably led to extinction.

There is still much that is obscure about the causes of evolution, but neither the small-scale facts of genetics, nor

the large-scale facts of palaeontology afford much comfort to the upholders of the teleological view.

Incidentally, its denial does not negate either teleology within the individual, or theism. The spectacle of evolution by natural causes may prove as delightful to the supreme being as to the biologist.—Yours, &c.,

J. B. S. HALDANE.

Trinity College, Cambridge.  
September 18th, 1926.

### THE QUESTIONNAIRE

SIR.—The assurance at the foot of the Questionnaire that all answers and names will be kept strictly confidential seems to me to suggest that we are living in an age in which the principle of religious toleration has still to be vindicated.

In politics and, indeed, in almost every branch of knowledge men are prepared to avow their beliefs without shame and without any pledge of strict confidence, but in matters of religion, held, generally, to be the most vital of all, there is still a shrinking timidity that betokens the fear of inspiring dislike or inflicting pain by a simple and honest declaration of the convictions to which one has been led by the reflections of a lifetime. It seems to me that if the assurance of "strict confidence" is necessary it implies either a fear of inspiring enmity or a desire to avoid offence by maintaining some kind of deception. Can any of your readers supply the solution for this deplorable state of affairs?—Yours, &c.,

A. STANLEY DAVIES.

Bryn Adda, Bangor.  
September 18th, 1926.

### "TO TRY AND. . . "

SIR.—In your issue of September 18th, "Purist," commenting on Mr. Webster's English, remarks: ". . . I shall be interested to learn if THE NATION and its readers is on my side or on that of the defence."

This may not be pedantic, but is it pure?—Yours, &c.,

NICK BAGENAL.

Addington, West Malling, Kent.  
September 20th, 1926.

SIR.—I am delighted to see "Purist" attacking this usage. If he is a pedant he is not alone. As a schoolmaster I invariably deduct marks for it. Can one imagine the French allowing so foolish a construction to be formed colloquially—*je tâcherai et viendrai, mais je crains que ce ne soit impossible!*

It may not seem irrelevant in a Liberal paper to allude to the Tory parrot-cry of "Wait and see," with which real permanent harm was done to Mr. Asquith. Those who know the context in which he first used the phrase will recognize the exactness of the grammar, and its incorrectness when used in what became its legendary sense. Mr. Asquith told a persistent questioner that the latter must "wait and (would eventually) see." If the phrase had meant that Mr. Asquith was the political Micawber of the Tory legend, he would have said that he proposed to "wait to see." But such niceties are powerless to check a good ignorant parrot-cry.—Yours, &c.,

S. H. WALL.

Brook House, Chigwell.  
September 21st, 1926.

### AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

SIR.—It is good news to learn from a well-signed letter in your issue of September 18th that an international boarding school is to be established at Geneva. More than thirty years ago I suggested that this experiment should be tried, for I felt that, although to begin with there would be the linguistic difficulty, this would soon be got over, and in the meanwhile the lads could continue their education, and, most important of all, would begin to learn a great lesson—that they had much in common, that as "foreigners" they were after all very much alike, and could eat together, work together, and play together in friendliness and comradeship. They would find that a foreigner need not be an enemy; and each boy returning to his own country would be a missionary of international amity, helping in some small way towards peace on earth and goodwill towards men.—Yours, &c.,

CUTHBERT GRUNDY.

Fisherbeck, Ambleside.  
September 19th, 1926.

## THE ISLAND OF THE LOTUS-EATERS

By LOUIS GOLDING.

INSIST to myself frequently that it is illogical to be so spellbound by islands as I am, and to be the more abjectly under their spell the more inaccessible they are. After all, islands partake of the nature of land in general, the same sky is over them, the same rock and earth constitute them. All you have to do is to pretend that the sea is beyond the next twist in the road and washes the farther slope of the hill you have just descended. If you pretended firmly enough, you could enjoy the experience of feeling yourself on an island without the inconvenience it usually takes to get to one, at any hour of the day or night. Nor need you diet yourself sparsely on dry toast and tea; nor swallow furtive prophylactics against sickness when your hearty friends are not looking.

But it will not do. You cannot so deceive yourself. An island is an island. It is even more bravely an island if you must pay for landing there with much tribulation. And the scientists will tell you that an island is not merely a lump of mainland surrounded by water. If you artificially convert Rutlandshire into an island to-morrow, it will develop its private modifications in fauna and flora. Its dialect will acquire its own subtle inflections. Its air and water will strike the nostrils and the palate adventurously.

But not, I fancy, so adventurously as the air and water of that far island of the Lotus-Eaters against the desert shores of North Africa whence I am lately returned

from wandering. For whatever cataclysm of nature may convert Rutlandshire into an island, Homer will never have sung of Rutlandshire. The wind of Rutlandshire will not be rhythmic with sublime hexameters, like the wind at Ithaca and Lipari and Ischia and the Island of the Lotus-Eaters.

Let me explain myself. I have already confessed to the wizardry exercised upon me by islands as such. But an island of which Homer sang, an island which Odysseus visited, is even more than an island, if the language and my mind can rise to such a conception. It is an altar. It is a Holy of Holies.

I have spent the springs of several years now visiting the islands of the Odyssey. It matters not how exiguous the reference of Homer might be. The islands of the Odyssey have been holy ground to me, and now at length I have visited them all. I have been to Ischia, where Circe made swine of her lovers, and Lipari, where Aeolus unloosened his winds, and Capri, where the sirens sang. Or if it veritably be the Galli Islands under the lee of the Sorrentine peninsula where Odysseus tied himself to the mast and stuffed the ears of his sailors with wax, there also my prow has cloven the quiet waters.

One island, the furthest of them, remained unvisited by me—the island where his sailors stuffed their mouths with lotus. The place has the name of Djerba now and lies towards Tripoli along the last confines of Tunisia. I

hardly think it is much easier to get there now than it was in the days of Odysseus. Twice or three times a month a snorting little steamboat sets out thence from Tunis. Or you may take the long train journey by Sousse and Sfax and into the arid south, where the palms of the oasis of Gabes rise against the shallow sea. Thence the noisiest public automobile in Africa proceeds into its most mysterious territory—the country of the troglodytes, the cave-dwellers, whom Herodotus encountered here some centuries before Christ, and whose furniture and garments now are no more complex than they were then. You halt for an hour or two in the incredible town of Medenine, where I will not allow my pen to linger lest I never arrive among the lotus-eaters. Hot hours lie before you among the jackal-haunted dunes. Then at the edge of the brown hills where half a dozen surly camels contemplate the cud, a more antique craft awaits you than Odysseus ventured in. Strange noises issue from its bowels. Its mast is engirdled by a pattern of horns. The Arabs take their places with their thick hoods drawn over their brows. At length, after such laborious journeying, you set foot in the island of the Lotus-Eaters. You have achieved the circuit of Odysseus's wanderings. Now, now—or surely, very soon—the great moment awaits you. You, too, shall fill your mouth with the most exquisite of fruits, more subtle than any spice, more opiate than poppies. Even as the warm waters lap the sands of Djerba and your fingers paddle drowsily among sea-weed; even as the slow camels tread their endless rounds upon the circuit of a rain-well, whence they draw water to irrigate the meadows of lotus—even during that time the hexameters of Homer will sway in your head like heavy draperies, singing: "So they set forth and enter the home of the Lotus-Eaters, that quiet people, which lays no deadly snare for them. They present the lotus to them, even its delights. From the moment when my sailors bring to their lips this fruit as sweet as honey, they have no other thought but to pass their days amongst that people. Their only pleasure is to taste the Lotus; they forget even the name of their native land. . . ."

When I landed upon the shore of Djerba, almost my first preoccupation was where the nearest meadow—or orchard should it be?—of lotus grew that I might taste its incomparable felicity. But not my first. What I first set eyes on was two couples of ink-black negroes, each couple bearing between its shoulders a bamboo pole whence a monstrous turtle swung. Who shall have turtle soup to-night, I wondered. What bearded Arab sheikh, what dapper French commissioner? For them their turtle-soup, I said. For me the lotus, even its delights.

I had hardly deposited my rucksack in the vaulted cavern of the hotel when I set forth to gather me lotus. Baedeker is clear enough about it: "From the lotus-tree (*Zizyphus Lotus*; Arabic *nebga*, Fr. *jujubier*), which thrives here, Homer called it the island of the *Lotophagi*."

Where then to find a *jujubier*? Familiar trees were here from English orchards—apple and pear and cherry. It was not any of these that had stolen the wits of Odysseus's sailors away. Olives also were here, certain of those gnarled veterans having quite certainly been planted by Roman colonists. The ripening fruit of the date-palm was also springing bushily along thin golden stems at the crown of the tree. But, alas, no man would lead me to the jujube.

I wonder if I lost very much by it. The only information I can extract with respect to the jujube is to the following effect: "A medium for the administration of drugs to be brought into contact with the mucous membrane of the throat. The mixture is strained and evaporated until it thickens to the right degree of viscosity. The flavouring, colouring, or medicinal ingredients. . . ."

No, no, potent as it sounds, that sort of jujube, that sort of lotus, could never have affected those gallant sailors quite so powerfully. It is possible I am on the wrong tack. There are other authorities who declare the lotus is the fruit of the *rhus oxyacanthoides*. That is preposterous on the face of it. What self-respecting sailor would let himself get drunk on the fruit of the *rhus oxyacanthoides*? The more tepid suggestion that by the "lotus" Homer meant no more formidable a fruit than the familiar date is no more acceptable. I do not believe that you can possibly go on eating dates till you forget the name of your native land.

Yet I for my part am certain I have eaten of Homer's lotus. Why has no scholar suggested that the lotus may, indeed, have been no more than a grape, nobler than any the vineyards of Champagne ever yielded, brought into amber fullness by the fierce sun of Djerba? There is a wine of Djerba tasted by few strangers. It is made by the Jews, an aboriginal colony which may have dwelled in Djerba what time Odysseus visited the island. The Muslims are a God-fearing and pious sect who, so far from drinking wine, will threaten to knife you if you offer them a cigarette in Ramadan. I drank the white sacred wine of the Jews of Djerba. I, too, have feasted off the lotus. Not in vain have I concluded the circuit of Homer's islands. What? Are you sceptical? You do not believe I grew drowsy on lotus? I leave you to go to the dogs on a box of dates. Or if you think that insufficiently adventurous—go to, suck the jujube. Let the mixture be strained and evaporated until it thickens to the right degree of viscosity; then bring it carefully into contact with the mucous membrane of the throat. But do not, I bid you, recite the hexameters of Homer. You are not worthy of them.

## DIARY OF AN EASTWARD JOURNEY

By ALDOUS HUXLEY.

### XVII.\*

**O**N THE HOOGLY.—The ship slides down the Hoogly, between the mudbanks and the palms.

Every now and then we pass a village, a huge white jute mill. Above the flat plain of the delta the sky is enormous and peopled with majestic clouds. After these months lived under a perpetually flawless blue, the spectacle of clouds is a delight and a refreshment. I understand, now, the inspiration of those Mogul paintings which represent princesses and great lords looking at the clouds. A dry season in India makes one long for a break in the monotony of too perfect weather. Cloud-gazing, when at last the approaching rains render it possible, must be a most delicious pastime, particularly when combined (as the Moguls in the paintings combine it) with dalliance, the sipping of sherbet, and the slow, deliberate smoking of an enormous bubble-bubble.

These clouds are messengers from the world that lies beyond the borders of India; my pleasure at seeing them is symbolical. For, to tell the truth, I am glad to be leaving India. I have met old friends in India, and made new friends; I have seen many delightful and interesting things, much beauty, much that is strange, much that is grotesque and comical. But all the same I am glad to be going away. The reasons are purely selfish. What the eye does not see the heart does not grieve over. It is because I do not desire to grieve that I am glad to be going. For

\* Nos. I.—XVI. appeared in THE NATION from March 6th to September 18th.

India is depressing as no other country I have ever known. One breathes in it not air, but dust and hopelessness. The present is unsatisfactory, the future dubious and menacing. The forces of the West have been in occupation for upwards of a century and a half. And yet five generations of peace and settled government have made the country, as a whole, no more prosperous than it was in the days of anarchy; according to some authorities, such as Digby, they have made it much poorer. Millions, at any rate, are still admittedly without enough to eat, all their lives. Custom and ancient superstition are still almost as strong as they ever were, and after a century and a half of Western government, nine Indians out of ten cannot read or write, and the tenth, who can, detests the Europeans who taught him. The educated and politically conscious profess democratic principles; but their instincts are profoundly and almost ineradicably aristocratic. They desire, theoretically, to see the country "progressing" in the Western sense of the term; but the practical ambition of most of them is to secure a quiet job without responsibilities or risks.

Meanwhile, the mountains of unnecessary labour, of evitable hardship and superfluous suffering are piled up, patiently, higher and ever higher. Millions upon millions are born and painfully live—to what end? God knows, it is hard enough to find a reason anywhere, West or East. But in India there is no conceivable answer to the question, at any rate in terms of the present existence. Metempsychosis had to be invented and the doctrine of *karma* elaborated with a frightful logic before the serried, innumerable miseries of India could be satisfactorily accounted for.

The ship goes sliding down stream. The clouds seem to beckon and lead on, away. To-morrow we shall be at sea.

**RANGOON.**—The precincts of the Shwe Dagon pagoda contain the world's finest specimens of what I may call the merry-go-round style of architecture and decoration. The huge bell-shaped spire, gilded from top to bottom, and shining, towards the sun, with intolerable high lights, stands in the midst; and round it are grouped the hundreds of subsidiary shrines, elaborately fretted, glittering like Aladdin's cave at the pantomime with a gaudy mosaic of coloured glass, gilded and painted, or dark, with the natural colour of the teakwood pinnacles and gables, against the golden shining of the pagoda. It seems a sacred Fun Fair, a Luna Park dedicated to the greater glory of Gautama—but more fantastic, more wildly amusing than any Bank Holiday invention. Our memories, after a first visit, were of something so curiously improbable, so deliriously and comically dream-like, that we felt constrained to return the following day to make quite sure that we had really seen it.

**ON THE IRRAWADDY.**—Ancient geographers imagined a river running completely round the earth. Travelling up the Irrawaddy from Mandalay, I wished that their fancy had been the truth. How delightful it would have been to go on and on in that leisured and comfortable paddle-steamer, gliding calmly through every temperature and nation, every city of the earth, and every natural phenomenon! The banks slide past, the country opens and shuts like a fan, plays the peacock with its plains and avenues and receding dykes. Turning deliberately, the mountains exhibit, now one face, now another, now a garment of sunset rose, now of black against the stars, now of green, now of dim remote indigo and purple. From time to time cities and villages variously beckon. On jutting headlands the stumps of ancient towers and temples look down and consider the reflection of their irrevocably perished splendour. And all the time the current symbolically flows, the sailing ships, the rafts, the little canoes approach, drift past, recede and vanish, like so many lives and loves. Such

is river travelling at its best, as it ought to be—as it certainly would be, if the ancient geographers were right and the earth were indeed girdled by a cosmic stream.

The upper reaches of the Irrawaddy would certainly form a section of this great imaginary river. In their kind they are perfect. Between Mandalay and Bhamo I found myself constantly reminded of those strange and beautiful pages in which Edgar Allan Poe describes "The Domain of Arnheim." It is long years since I read the story; but I remember vividly the crystal river which gave access to the domain, I remember the white sands, the green and sloping lawns, the flowering trees, the woods—all the natural beauties so artfully arranged. For the domain of Arnheim was a masterpiece in the art of landscape gardening; it was nature, but composed; it was the non-human chaos of the world informed by the spirit of man. The hills and jungles of Upper Burma are savagely innocent of human arrangement; but chance has often contrived to group them significantly and with art about their central river. Here, on a certain calm evening, the water and the plain, the distant mountains, the limpid greenish sky fell all at once into ready-made Claude Lorraines; and the white pagoda in the foreground, on the river's bank, was a fragment of ancient Rome, a ruin of Carthage. Claude persisted for miles; and, appropriately enough, while we were steaming through him, a cool, delicious fragrance, like the scent of distant tobacco flowers, haunted the air. It seemed as though the spirit of his art were finding expression in terms of another sense than that of sight.

At another place the hills came nearer; the narrow strip of plain between the river and their feet was covered with teak trees, intensely and darkly green. It was late afternoon; the trees shone in the warm and level light, the hills behind them were flushed and at a certain moment the vision framed in the open window was a strong and glowing Constable. And in the defiles, where the river breaks through a range of hills and the thick multitudinous jungle comes swarming down to the water's edge, each turn of the stream revealed a rich, fantastic composition—the composition of some artist not yet born, but destined, it was obvious, to be a master.

But not every landscape is a work of art, and river travelling is not invariably delightful. So, alas, we discovered, as we journeyed downstream from Mandalay towards Rangoon. The weather, as we advanced, grew almost hourly more oppressive; the cattle and hides with which our steamer was loaded, piercingly stank; the landscape was almost as poor as the food. On either side of the mile-wide river the country was mostly flat and treeless. For a day we steamed through the pale and arid hills of the Burma oil fields. An immense black smoke, visible through all a morning's navigation, streamed half across the sky. A strike was in progress; the Burmese, who objected, justifiably from all accounts, to the Wild West methods and cinema manners of the American drillers, had committed a murder and set a light to eight hundred thousand gallons of petroleum. A spirited race, the Burmese—a little too highly so, perhaps. But whatever the rights and wrongs, in these particular circumstances, of murder and arson, that streamer of black smoke certainly did something to enliven the prospect. I regretted it, when at last it sank out of sight.

But the monotony was not entirely without alleviations. At Pakkoku, for example (Pakkoku, which the French lady on the steamer would insist on calling "Pas Cocu"—I suppose because her husband so manifestly was one), an acrobat was doing extraordinary things on a slack rope. At another town, whose less significant name I have forgotten, we stopped for several hours to embark some scores of tons of monkey nuts. They were bound for Ran-

goon, and thence, I learned, for Marseilles, where, in due course, they would be turned into Pure Superfine Provençal Olive Oil. At a village lower down the river, we shipped the best part of a thousand lacquered kettle drums—for home consumption, I suppose. They were charming instruments, shaped like enormous egg-cups—a foot, a stalk, a bowl with the parchment stretched across its mouth. What a cargo of potential Burmese happiness we were carrying under those taut diaphragms! But none leaked out into the ship. It was an odious voyage, and when at last we reached Prome, whence the railway starts for Rangoon, it was with a feeling of profound relief that we disembarked. Near the landing stage stood two tall trees sparse-leaved against the sky and laden with an innumerable and repulsive fruitage of sleeping bats. The sun was sinking. With the waning of light, the bats began to stir. What had seemed a vegetable unfolded and slowly stretched a leathery wing. There was a sudden flutter, an agitation of twigs, and two of the pendulous black fruits came together and began to make love, head downwards.

**BHAMO.**—Between the main street of Bhamo and the river bank, or what will be the river bank, after the rains—for at this dry season the water is distant a hundred yards or more across a beach of sand—lies a little plain of two or three acres. It is a much-trodden, dusty plat of land, and, save for one enormous tree growing in the midst, quite bare. It is a fine tree, not at all tropical in aspect, but oak-like, with long limbs branching almost horizontally from the trunk some fifteen or twenty feet above the ground. The very image of those great trees which, in Callot's etchings, give shelter to the encamped gypsies, protect the archers, as they do their target practice on St. Sebastian, from the rays of the sun, or serve as convenient gallows for the victims of war. But it was not alone the tree that reminded me of Callot; it was its setting, it was the whole scene. The river in its mile-wide bed with the flat fields beyond it, provided for the solitary tree that background of blank interminable extension, to which Callot was always so partial. Nor was the bustle immediately beneath and around the tree less characteristic than the blank behind it. Horses and little mules stood tethered beside their loaded packsaddles. Men came and went with burdens, or stood in groups round one of the patient beasts. In the foreground food was being cooked over a fire, and, squatting on their heels, other men were eating. Under the huge tree and against the blank background of receding flatness and empty sky, a multitudinous and ant-like life was busily lived. It might have been the break-up of a gypsy encampment, or the tail-end of Impruneta fair, or a military bivouac out of the "Miseries of War." It might have been—but in actual fact it was the starting of one of the caravans that march, laden with cotton and Burmese silk, Burmese jade and rubies, over the hills into China.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

**M**R. J. B. FAGAN'S "And So To Bed," at the Queen's Theatre, is, of course, an attempt to give stage life to our immortal diarist. The difficulty is that Pepys himself is so present to us in flesh and blood when we read the Diary, that Mr. Edmund Gwenn diverting himself upon the boards seems lifeless in comparison. It is not so much his fault as Mr. Fagan's, for to paint Pepys in the round is a difficult task. Instead of seeing the extremely competent man of affairs, the more-than-dilettante immensely curious in scientific matters, the friend of Evelyn, and the profound student of music, we see only a rather coarse amorist, fond of singing a catch among convivial, with incomprehensible moments of public rectitude. Mrs. Pepys is similarly vulgarized, though delightfully acted by Miss Yvonne Arnaud. We see nothing of the courageous and devoted wife, only the stupidly jealous woman, and get no hint of the real Mrs. Pepys who had more self-respect than is given to most human beings to have. Mr. Fagan

seems to think that England in the Restoration really was the land of cuckoldry; it is only so in the great comedies, which crystallized one aspect of life into a diamond. We do not object to the convenient distortions Mr. Fagan makes, such as Pepys's boy knocking down Creed's boy some years after the event, nor the gratuitous addition of Pepys's delight at it, but one does object to the distortion of character. As a farce the play is amusing enough, and many of the audience were heard to declare that it was a sweet play. The situation in the second act is worthy of the best traditions of rattling farce, but unfortunately, our Pepys is not a farcical figure, and Mr. Fagan cannot convince us that he is.

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"The Whole Town's Talking," at the Strand, is, on the other hand, a light farce *tout court*, without any attempt to build up character. Nevertheless, Miss Anita Loos and Mr. John Emerson have succeeded in creating a figure in the good old tradition that produced people as solid as Lord Dundreary. But just as "Sam" Sothern deserved the credit there, so does Mr. John Deverell here. His performance of Chester Binney, the simple middle-aged man as innocent of love as a buttercup, who is made to assume the rôle of a Don Juan of the Midlands, is a real triumph. The whole fun is amazingly well kept up, and there is not a dull moment, though the amusement is rather on the physical level. The audience shrieks with laughter, but one never hears that deep chuckle which is the indication of the profoundest, most gratifying amusement. Unfortunately the acting of all the women except Miss Ruth Maitland is very bad. It is not altogether the fault of the actresses, but it is the fault of the management for thinking that an empty part can be played by an inexperienced actress. Such a part is just the one which calls for an immense deal of finish and style: the actress has to create what the author did not. It is easier for ignorance to make a success of Vittoria Corrombona than of Ethel Simmons in this play. The idea is a good one, but the sort of inconsequence which carries one happily through, say, half of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" is not enough for the stage. However, it is all very gay and inconsequent and impossible, and it is to be hoped that Miss Loos will try again.

\* \* \*

The Three Choirs Festival held at Worcester from September 5th to the 10th was the two hundred and sixth meeting of the Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester choirs. There is no more ancient musical institution of its kind in the world. This year the event could almost be spoken of as an Elgar Festival. This was as it should have been, seeing that Elgar was born at Broad Heath, a few miles from Worcester, and that his music still divides the forces of criticism. The performances of "The Apostles" and "The Kingdom" confirmed me in my belief that Elgar is a man of most rare vision, who cannot, however, endure the responsibility of its translation for long at a time. There are times when his music touches great heights—the Prelude to "The Kingdom," Peter's address and Mary's hymn, for example. At other times he brings to mind the words of Bottom: "I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and the bones." The performances of these works were aspiring, but not sufficiently so to hold the Mystic Chorus in the narrow way of true intonation. As is the sacred custom, the first work given was Mendelssohn's "Elijah." I was amused to see with what zeal the Bishop of Worcester took his part among the tenors during the Baal choruses. The new works were disappointing. Edgar Bainton matched the intense personality of John Donne's "Hymn to God the Father" with some complex and experimental choral writing, and in "High Heaven's King," Sir Walford Davies attempted to persuade us how deeply he had been moved by some verses from Spenser and the Gospel of St. John.

\* \* \*

The Rialto Cinema, Coventry Street, is now showing the first part of the French film version of Hugo's "Les Misérables": it has been entitled, with the romantic vagueness beloved of the film trade, "The Soul of Humanity." It is, nevertheless, an excellent film, and the story has not been treated with the sentimentality suggested by the title. It deals with the early life of the ex-convict Jean Valjean,

from his encounter with the saintly bishop, his amendment of life and successful progress till he becomes mayor of the small country town, until he is again hounded out by the intrigues of the police spy Javert; also with his part in the fortunes of the unfortunate Fantine and her child Cosette. The film is done on the grand scale, with a great variety of scene, but is never, in the bad sense, "spectacular": it also attempts, not unsuccessfully, to convey psychological states of mind (its devices in this respect have been influenced by German films). The part of Valjean is acted with great dignity and restraint by M. Gabriel Gabrio, and the child who plays Cosette is extremely natural and charming.

\* \* \*

Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, September 25.—Moisewitsch, piano recital, at 3, at Wigmore Hall.  
 Sunday, September 26.—Mr. C. Delisle Burns on "Unemployment and Europe's Folly," at 11, at South Place; The Fellowship of Players in "The Taming of the Shrew," at the Apollo.  
 Monday, September 27.—"A Midsummer Night's Dream," at the Old Vic; Opening of Norwich Repertory Season, with "King Lear," at the Maddermarket Theatre; B.E.S.S. Shakespeare Festival starts, Newcastle-on-Tyne.  
 Wednesday, September 29.—Mr. A. P. Herbert's "The White Witch," at the Haymarket.  
 Thursday, September 30.—Mr. Hastings Turner's "The Scarlet Lady," at the Criterion; Ibsen's "Rosmersholm," at the Kingsway; "Faust," at the Old Vic. Mr. Eustace Miles on "Dyspepsia and its Cure," at 3.45, at 40, Chandos Street; Dorothy Smithard, vocal recital, at 8.15, at Æolian Hall.  
 Friday, October 1.—Dorsey Whittington, piano recital, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.

OMICRON.

### GIPSY LOVE

THE gipsy held a baby  
 Bundled in shawlings bright,  
 (As fair it was as a star-beam  
 On the heart of a sultry night;)  
 And she tossed it  
 And hugged it  
 Till her fury caused me pain:  
 But the babe, all rumpled,  
 With face soft-crumpled  
 Crowed high to be thrown again.  
 Then fierce with the sable gipsy  
 The changeling cupid strove,  
 And twisted his tiny fingers,  
 Like darts, in her hair's dim grove,  
 And tugged it, and lugged it,  
 Till she, for a swift reproof  
 Swept over her child  
 With a motion wild  
 And smothered its hands with love.

M. M. JOHNSON.

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## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

MR. WELLS v. MR. BELLOC

**A** GREAT deal of amusement and instruction can be obtained from the booklet just published, "Mr. Belloc Objects," by H. G. Wells (Watts, 1s.). The controversy which has arisen between these two distinguished writers is of far greater interest than is usually the case with such intellectual dogfights. Even the circumstances surrounding the origin of the controversy and of Mr. Wells's booklet are remarkable and worthy of record. Mr. Belloc wrote twenty-four long articles attacking Mr. Wells's "Outline of History," and the series was published in three Catholic papers, the *UNIVERSE*, the *SOUTHERN CROSS* of Cape Colony, and the American *CATHOLIC BULLETIN*. The tone of these articles has the acrid superiority which Mr. Belloc adopts towards those who do not agree with his views on Roman Catholicism, drink, "European" civilization, and Jews, and I do not think that Mr. Wells exaggerates when he says that the articles are "grossly personal and provocative." But they also purported seriously and elaborately to prove Mr. Wells's ignorance and mis-statements with regard to what is known about the origin of species and in particular of man. Mr. Wells wrote six articles in reply, and sent them to the Catholic papers which had published the original attack, offering to give them, if necessary, without payment. In each case they were refused. To the editor of the *UNIVERSE* Mr. Wells protested, and (I quote the Foreword) "under the stimulus of this remonstrance, the editor of the *UNIVERSE*, after a month's delay and various consultations with Mr. Belloc and the directors of his paper, offered Mr. Wells the 'opportunity of correcting definite points of fact upon which he might have been misrepresented,' but declined to allow him to defend his views or examine Mr. Belloc's logic and imputations in his columns. Mr. Wells was disinclined for a series of wrangles upon what might or might not be a 'point of fact.'" Mr. Wells, thereupon, offered his articles to various non-Catholic papers, both British and American, some of which, I believe, were journals of very large circulation. In every case the articles were rejected, and so Mr. Wells decided to publish them in book form.

\* \* \*

You do not want to be a journalist to see, after reading this booklet, that the articles are first-class copy, even without Mr. Wells's name attached to them. In ordinary circumstances nine out of ten editors would have jumped at them, with a large cheque in both hands. Surely this is a very remarkable phenomenon in these days of alleged enlightenment. Here is a Roman Catholic writer attacking one of our most popular authors for giving, in a historical work, an account of the origin of man which has not received the *imprimatur* of the Roman Catholic Church, and when he wishes to defend himself, he finds the doors of the Press shut against him. The fact is at least worthy of record.

\* \* \*

As to the controversy itself, I must admit to being considerably amused by the personal side of it. Here certainly Mr. Belloc has got as good as and more than he gave. But behind Mr. Belloc's pompous and offensive superiority and Mr. Wells's enjoyment of "cocking snooks" at it, lies a real issue. The issue, as I see it, is between obscurantism and a genuine attempt to state and face facts. I suppose that I am not impartial in this controversy, for I am definitely on Mr. Wells's side. I have

heard people whose judgments I respect say many hard things of "The Outline of History." Anyone can pick holes in the book; anyone can pick holes in any book which attempts to give a bird's-eye view of the history of man from the time when there was no man until the nineteenth century. Whether such a book is worth writing and reading depends not on the holes in it, but on the shape and size of the holes. The holes in "The Outline of History" seem to me of the kind which do not prevent it being of remarkable value to any ordinary person, whether he be a Roman Catholic, a Protestant, or an agnostic, who wishes to know the main facts which constitute the outlines of human history. Mr. Wells, like all of us, has his prejudices and his ignorances, and they distort some of what he calls facts in his book. But he has sufficient knowledge, honesty, and scientific training and outlook not to allow them to distort the outline.

\* \* \*

Probably some of the facts concerning the origin and history of mankind contradict the preconceived beliefs of every one of us, whether we be Christians or agnostics. Certainly the facts with regard to natural selection and prehistoric man are in conflict with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church which were formulated in the Middle Ages. The issue raised by this controversy and the publication of Mr. Wells's articles, not in the Press, but in the form of a booklet, is whether ordinary people should be allowed to know the facts and should discuss their implications or whether the mediæval system of obscurantism and of the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* should be applied to all such dangerous subjects. Mr. Belloc, in his perpetual attacks upon scientists and historians, has shown himself to take his stand definitely on obscurantism and the *Index*. His methods in attacking "The Outline of History" are his usual methods. To pretend that Charles Darwin invented a preposterous and now exploded theory in order to "get rid of the necessity for a Creator" (surely no more false statement than this with regard to Darwin's motives and scientific integrity has ever been made by a controversialist!), to set up a bogus "European" or Latin or Catholic culture, whose scientists and historians are never quoted, though their works, unknown to benighted non-Catholic Britons, however learned and distinguished, always confirm the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and Mr. Belloc—to do this is only a new variation upon what has now become a very familiar tune.

\* \* \*

Perhaps the most interesting thing in Mr. Wells's booklet is his last chapter. Leaving the acrid region of detailed controversy, he tries to find a reason for his difference with Mr. Belloc. He suggests that fundamentally their difference arises from their belonging to two different types of mind with two entirely different visions of the universe. Mr. Belloc belongs to the old type of mind and school of thought in which the individual life is all that matters, and there is a vision of "a fixed and unprogressive humanity working out an enormous multitude of individual lives from birth to either eternal beatitude or to something not beatitude." To Mr. Wells life in the universe is "a steadily changing system," and the individual life is comparatively unimportant. It is an episode which ends, though life goes on.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## THE ORIGINS OF GREECE

**The Formation of the Greek People.** By A. JARDÉ. (Kegan Paul. 16s.)

The new volume of the Kegan Paul History of Civilization has much to recommend it. The translator, M. R. Dobie, obscurely indicated behind the title-page, has done the work of translation in such a way that the book reads as if an English original. There is nothing of the Tite-Live or Denys d'Halicarnasse style that made the English versions of M. Boissier so bright, almost quaint, thirty years ago; and the idiom, as well as the names, becomes English. One can read M. Jardé with something of the freedom and pleasure that one had in reading M. Boissier; and that is no mean compliment. M. Jardé avoids the trick of some foreign scholars whose books of late have been made accessible; he generalizes less sweepingly, uses fewer vague abstracts, and gives us real facts, glimpses that leave us less forlorn. It really is Greece that he is describing, and he convinces the reader the more readily because he does not talk too much about it, and does not, in fact, know too much about it.

For there is a great deal that M. Jardé does not know, and, what is more, he does not pretend to know it. He tells us honestly that the origins of the Greek race are really not known. You can talk of *Ægeans*, *Mycenæans*, *Achæans*, and so on, but you do not really know very much about them. Even the geometric art of the archæologists does not give you quite mathematical certainty about Doriens and others. The origins of Greek religion are lost in obscurity, he says—thank goodness!; and the races that somehow or other made Greece are mixed and uncertain. Doriens and Ionians took at one stage, perhaps at several, to emphasizing their essential differences. No doubt; just as in the war we made it plain that we were not Germans. We are not exactly, but Tacitus counts the *Anglii* as Germans; and Germans and English blend and make equally good Americans. All these odd ancient peoples somehow made Greeks; that is the main thing. Myth, again, M. Jardé will not let us try to torture into History; and he raises the shrewd question as to the fixity of myth and legend. We ought to have guessed so much, if we had thought how Gaius Gracchus gave a colour to Marcus Manlius, and how indistinguishable Mr. Lloyd George and Jack Cade (was it—or William Pitt?) used now and then to be.

In place of guesswork, in place of reasserted Agamemnons, with one foot in Boghaz-Keui and one in the "Iliad," M. Jardé leaves Homer just what he was—Homer in short; and takes us on personal tours of inspection round historic Greece. Here he begins with one very shrewd remark—"His national territory was not for the Greek, as for the modern man, an abstraction, only to be visualized by means of maps. It was a concrete, living reality; the citizen knew every view and every corner of it." So we experiment with a good many views and a good many corners—rivers, *katavothras* (however you spell them; I am a little strained at this point in my relations with M. R. Dobie—a little anxious), forests, rainfalls, sea-food, marbles, mining. I own that with years these things draw me more than sun-myths or the details of constitutions—both aberrations of History too familiar to my youth. Yet here comes in M. Jardé with sense again; we must not dogmatize—there is no geographical determinism available to explain Greek civilization by its environment. At this point he has a cold dash for my personal pride; it was Hegel, not I, who remarked that Turks for four or five centuries have lived under Greek skies and written no "Odysseys." It is hard to be original with so many clever people getting in before you.

Of course, I have to disagree with M. Jardé here and there. I do not think he knows Herodotus as intimately as he should. The Gauls early found their way to the Capitol, Sainte-Beuve said; but, like Professor Bury and some other English scholars, perhaps they are cleverer than Herodotus, and miss his mind that way. On the other hand, when M. Jardé says that Aristotle's "Constitution of Athens" is marquerie work, one can only wish English and German scholars would remember it. Incidentally, it is remarkable that in his list of books, among some one hundred and fifty

writers, only nine British subjects find a place. Perhaps that is a valuable feature in the book.

M. Jardé is not writing a history of Greece. He sketches the history and develops the formation, if that is a lucid way of putting it. One reader, at least, will tell the world he has enjoyed the book, has profited by it, and is not yet done with it; he means to use it again, and meanwhile ventures to tell others interested in History that this is a book for them.

T. R. GLOVER.

## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POE

**Edgar Allan Poe. A Study in Genius.** By JOSEPH W. KRUTCH. (Knopf. 10s. 6d.)

THERE is often a tendency to interpret literature and art in terms of the fashionable science, philosophy, or religion of the day. That is really an under-statement, for in the mass of criticism produced, especially in the past two centuries, by far the greater part comes within that category. There are metaphysical critics like Coleridge, historical critics like Sainte-Beuve, scientific critics like Taine, all influenced by studies quite outside the boundaries of art. There have been absurd critics like Max Nordau, applying in a bovine way to artists a measure derived from some scientific fad. Obviously, this sort of interpretation (so different from what one might call the pure criticism of a Dryden or a Wordsworth) may be worthless or may be valuable. It is often rather temporary, like Matthew Arnold's Gallic lucidity which owes so much to Renan and Sainte-Beuve, or Pater's quasi-German interpretation of the Renaissance; but, when really well done by first-class men such as those named, it does leave a permanent mark. The interpretation, that is to say, is neither final nor even so important as the critic imagines, but it makes more complex and perhaps more enjoyable and intelligent the attitude of subsequent generations to art and literature. The Renaissance has been made very much more complex for us by nineteenth-century criticism. More recently, critics have galvanized Byzantine art into existence—l'Association Guillaume Budé is even reviving Byzantine literature—and we have almost invented primitive and savage art in this century.

The discoveries of archæology, with the subsequent rapid expansion of anthropology, plainly influenced the admiration for all sorts of primitive and savage art. Psychology is much less useful to literary criticism than to biography, and its critical value is probably greatly over-estimated because of the tendency to confuse the mind of a man with the art he produces. (We talk of Browning when we mean Browning's poems, and of Browning's passion when we mean the episode of Ottima and Sebald or "In a Gondola.") But as very few people are interested in art and literature, and quite a number are curious about the personalities of artists, this does not matter in practice, and we shall continue to hear of the benefits accruing to criticism from the study of psychology. Biography, especially in the sense that it is the study of minds, and in the still more limited sense of the study of artists' minds, has already been strongly influenced. No doubt the biography of every important author and painter and sculptor will be rewritten in terms of modern psychology within the next decade—rather an awful thought to contemplate. But when these are done well, intelligently, and without pedantry—like Mr. Krutch's book on Poe—a very definite addition will be made to our knowledge. We shall not perhaps enjoy works of art as such with any more intensity or delight, but we shall certainly be saved from some erroneous interpretations. Thus, Mr. Krutch's book is valuable because he presents a coherent and convincing explanation of Poe's psychology, which incidentally destroys most of the over-admiring and over-depreciatory criticism of Poe, especially of the last century. Neither the Victorian nor the Symboliste attitude to Poe can be any longer accepted.

Mr. Krutch's explanation of Poe's psychology can be better given in his own words than by any paraphrase:—

"Doubtless he was aware in his own mind of nothing except the charm which feminine beauty divorced from any suggestion of conscious sex had for him, and he would call his admiration for Virginia a worship of purity: but

when we consider the distaste which his writings reveal for the whole idea of sexual passion and the unhappy history of his constantly frustrated flirtations with other women, we may guess that this abnormal absorption in purity was but one of the outward signs of a deep-lying inhibition, and we may guess also the function which Virginia was to perform in his life, though he himself did not clearly understand the fascination which she had for him. Her youth would serve as an excuse for leaving her untouched, and the fact that he was already married would furnish him with a plausible reason why all his affairs with other women must remain, if not exactly Platonic, at least unconsummated.

"In Mrs. Clemm he both loved and used the mother whose Shadow haunted him; in Virginia he had bodily before his eyes that consumptive angel who figures in all his dreams. They were ghostly shadows whose unreality seemed to make unnecessary the physical union which he could not offer. . . .

"In real life nothing stood between Poe and a realization of his infirmity except the youth, artificially prolonged by disease and mental simplicity, of his wife; but in his darkly voluptuous dreams death comes to rescue him definitely from the torturing conflict between desire and repugnance, and to present him the situation which contains for him the acme of voluptuousness—one, that is to say, in which he can contemplate woman without realizing that it is not Youth or Death or Purity or Disease, but only himself which stands between him and the possibility of normally consummated passion. . . .

"Just as his whole life was a struggle, conducted with all the cunning of the unconsciousness, against a realization of the psychic impotence of his sexual nature, so was it a struggle also against a realization of the mental instability to which the first gave rise. It was a battle doomed to be lost from the beginning, and shortly before the final simultaneous dissolution of his mind and body Poe confessed to at least one fully developed delusion of persecution. . . .

"First reasoning in order to escape feeling and then seizing upon the idea of reason as an explanation of the mystery of his own character, Poe invented the detective story in order that he might not go mad."

The convinced devotee of modern psychology will probably accept all this as final, but there will perhaps be some hesitation in those who suspect a touch of charlatanism in these too commodious, too water-tight, too ingenious explanations. Impotence is a regular god in the machine for explaining the eccentricities of genius. It has been attributed to Baudelaire (in spite of the negress) and to Stendhal and to many others. If every man who cannot produce the birth-certificates of a bevy of bastards is to be written down an eunuch, it will go hard with some of us. But even if we accept Mr. Krutch's explanation as correct—and it certainly sounds very convincing—there are one or two further remarks which cannot be withheld. The upshot of his analysis comes to this: That Poe was physically and mentally abnormal. But that does not in the least explain his genius *per se*. The "normal" is a myth. What is a "normal" man? And if Poe was what we choose to call abnormal, do we know enough to state categorically that there is a mind sufficiently distinct from the normal to be considered "genius" of which it could be said that there was nothing abnormal about it? Was Poe's abnormality different in kind or only in degree from the abnormality of other men of genius? If there is abnormality in every mind of genius, then this analysis of Poe's mind has not brought us very far. If, on the other hand, the minds of most men of genius are really normal and Poe's belongs to the category of the abnormal which includes Baudelaire and Blake and De Quincey and Nietzsche and Piere Vidal and Rimbaud and Kit Smart, then the really interesting problem is this: Why did these abnormal minds produce admirable works of art, and why do all the other abnormal minds of the same kind with which psychologists are acquainted never produce any art at all or art which is of no interest? There is the true problem, and the psychologists never even formulate it. It does not explain the "Ode to a Nightingale" if you prove with medical accuracy that Keats was a consumptive; and remarkably little light is thrown on "Don Quixote" when we learn that Cervantes was mutilated at Lepanto and wrote the book in prison. Impotence and a tendency to delusional insanity stimulated by occasional bursts of frantic alcoholism are perhaps more disturbing to an artist than mutilation and imprisonment or a malignant disease, but they do not really explain the power and charm of "Helen" and "The Fall of the House of Usher," they do not explain or interpret the prose and poetry of Poe.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

## THE FISHERMAN OF WHITEHALL

**Fallodon Papers.** By VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON, K.G. Woodcuts by ROBERT GIBBINGS. (Constable. 10s. 6d.)

An essay entitled "The Influence of the Country Life of England on its Government" is still to be written, and the author will find "Fallodon Papers" an important document. This is not to say that others should not read Lord Grey's essays. Everyone who when he goes into the English countryside goes home will have a rare pleasure in this book, for it is written by one who was born an angler and whose spirit has been housed perpetually in English country, wherever his body may have been. It is significant of the fate of politicians that the mere sight of Lord Grey's name starts in one's mind the complicated and wearisome reverberations of European politics. This book proves that Lord Grey is a fisher in natural waters, a trumper over rough country, an observer of birds, a lover of solitude and tranquillity. Yet he will be remembered as one who cast his fly over waters deeper, darker, and more tempestuous than any river of Britain. Writing on the fly-fisherman, Lord Grey relates how he was once recalled to London from a Highland river during a winter-harassed spring. After a few days he travelled north again by night. He went straight from the train to his favourite pool. Spring had come, the sun was on the water, salmon were rising. He had a good long day's fishing. This sounds commonplace enough. But the fisherman's description is so sweet, sound, and vigorous as to raise him for a few pages into the company of Izaak Walton. Anglers, says Lord Grey, are born, not made. You either have the impulse to fight an equal battle with a fish in a stretch of lonely water, or you have not. His pleasure in fishing, he delightfully confesses, is so great that he has to force himself to let the New Year come in before allowing himself to lie abed and dream of the pools he will be fishing in April. This may be true, but he is too modest in saying that the angler's ecstasy is incommunicable. No doubt its quintessence is as inseparable from the act as that of a perfectly timed late cut or a scrum-half's pass that sets the three-quarters properly going. But Lord Grey in his fishing pages does communicate, even to one who has never even captured a stickleback and put it in a treacle-tin.

It is worth while to pause on the titles of some of these essays: "The Pleasure of Reading," "Pleasure in Nature," "Recreation." Thousands of people, in examination-rooms and elsewhere, must have written on these subjects, and in Lord Grey's treatment there is little that is new, nothing that is clever or consciously artful. The analysis is not acute, the range is limited, the humour often a little heavy-footed, the style extremely simple. There is even a curious repetition of argument, quotation, and anecdote in different essays which a professional writer would have avoided. What, then, is the secret of the deep satisfaction which these earnest, tranquil, deliberately advisory discourses afford? Why is it so certain that Lord Grey knows what he is talking about? The answer seems to be that the contact between author and reader is unusually complete. A fault of so much even of the best of contemporary writing is that the reader is left with the puzzling problem: find the author. We admire the courageous experimentalism, the brilliant mental construction, the restless, unanchored energy. Somewhere behind that astonishing façade lurks the man who built it, and he built it out of his own life. But he has concealed himself: we are dazzled and excited, but we do not penetrate. These essays, on the other hand, are the plain and honest expression of a plain and honest man. They are homely buildings into which one may enter and feel at home. Lord Grey is the reverse of experimental. He is all for planning and foresight, for the old and the proved in books and friendships. Wordsworth is his poet: the concluding essay of this book is a really illuminating study of the human side of "The Prelude." Jane Austen is to him the most wonderful of English novelists; and when he remarks that Walton—

"at the end of his most famous and beautiful book, puts simply this quotation: Study to be quiet," one thinks that the same would have served well as a title to these essays. Of modern literature he has little to say. In fact he invites the gibes of the irreverent by suggesting that the way to get at the best of modern books is to rely

on half a dozen friends, trusty separators of the sheep from the goats, to keep up a constant supply of the purest mutton.

It is perhaps significant that "Thoughts on Public Life," the one essay which is foreign to the tenour of this book, is also the least satisfying. There is a curious and unexpected lack of grasp, the simplifications are too sweeping, and over all there seems to hang the shadow of weariness and even disappointment. It is then that one realizes the poignancy of a statement in the preface. Throughout this book Lord Grey is literally talking. The essays were taken down in shorthand from his speeches. He could not write them because his sight has gone in the service of England.

### THE STATE

**The Modern State.** By R. M. MACIVER. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press. London: Milford. 21s.)

PROFESSOR MACIVER has written an able, learned, and eloquent book. By an interesting combination of history and analysis, he has sought to show at once how the modern State has come to be, and what in fact it is. Our own day is deeply concerned about the foundations of politics; and there has hardly, perhaps, been a period since the French Revolution when so much effort has been expended upon their scrutiny. The essence of the problem lies in the fact that the age of sovereignty, inaugurated, broadly, with the close of the religious wars, is now drawing slowly to its close. In the main, the change is due to the impact of science upon the modern world. The new means of communication, the world-market they have brought into being, and the lethal weapons discovered by the ingenuity of chemists, have annihilated the separateness of the nation-State. The inadequacy, moreover, of purely political categories and institutions has transferred the centre of discussion from powers to functions. It is not now a question of what is the sphere in which the State should exert its powers; rather the debate is how the powers should be distributed in the exercise of functions which defy the niceties of definition or limitation.

In this discussion, Professor MacIver occupies a middle ground. He rejects the general Hegelian position which sought to make of the State the final expression of corporate consciousness, and he has no sympathy with that limited Marxian view which regards it as no more than the armed defender of capitalist interests. He sees the State as an association, among others, in the greater community, which uses the coercive instrument of law to maintain the conditions, in an external sense, of social order. For him there are spheres, religion, for example, into which it may not enter. There are others, the control of property, for instance, which it is bound to concern itself with in order to fulfil the purpose for which it exists. He believes that the achievement of its end depends upon what, roughly, we call representative democracy. He denies that the State possesses an absolute sovereignty because the function for which it possesses power is relative and not absolute. The State is the creature of law, and law, in its turn, is born of the wider social process through which, and in which, the State itself has its being. Born of the community, it lives by shaping itself to the needs of the community; and the allegiance to which it is entitled is set by the degree in which it truly serves those needs.

Most of us will find little with which to quarrel in the general thesis Professor MacIver sets out to maintain. Our difficulties, if I may interpret my own feeling about his book, will arise from a sense that the idea of community has for him a certain mystic element about it which makes it very dubious whether it is really intelligible in rational terms. Community has for him the connotation of ultimate unity. Yet to many of us the whole difficulty in politics is to see in the idea of community, at least as a social fact, more than a bracket surrounding a vast system of associations in which unity is at best only partial and, necessarily, incomplete.

We see those associations as bodies which are striving, again in a partial way, to find the conditions through which their members may attain a satisfactory harmony of personality. In their effort they come always in contact with, and sometimes into conflict against, the State as the representative of an order which they are seeking to change. For them, at that point, the interest in the State is the question of what its representatives are endeavouring to protect in the policy they adopt. The primary problem of the State, that is to say, is a theory of the governmental act. How ought it to be organized to give the best results? What pushes it one way, rather than another way? At that point, in this view, what is above all important is the relation to the State of the property-system. For it is in terms of what the latter implies that the colour and texture of State-policy in fact takes its chief origin. Rights, for example, which Professor MacIver agrees that the State exists to maintain, are always relative to property. It will be broadly true that in any given State the more property an individual, taken as a type, has, the more rights he will possess. That, in its turn, involves the thesis that equality is unattainable, whatever the forms of the State, in the presence of unequal distribution of economic power. Yet the purpose Professor MacIver attributes to the State cannot be fulfilled in the absence of equality. The State then becomes not the organ of the community, but the organ of that part of the community in whose interest the balance of property is tilted. The order it maintains is then an order which serves that special interest of a few and not the general interest of the many. Properly to organize the State is then an issue, to use Professor MacIver's metaphor, of discovering the conditions upon which not merely men may be charged with the guardianship of the highway, but upon which it is worth while to recognize that the highway is in truth a highway at all.

Able, therefore, as is Professor MacIver's statement of his thesis, I do not feel that he has really met the issue that is posed by the pluralist. The latter argues that in conditions which make for diversity and antagonism of interest, it is useless to speak of the State as an instrument of a unity that is unattainable. Professor MacIver replies that the State "ultimately succeeds"; by which, I take it, he means that the conflicts, over the space of history, are somehow, though slowly, resolved. I do not share that optimism, which seems to imply a faith in progress which I should like to see justified at length. The problem is, of course, complicated by the fact that while the conditions prevent the State from fulfilling the purpose assigned to it, the State itself is the instrument through which, in the main, those conditions are preserved or changed. That is the strength of the position occupied by those who argue that the State is essentially a power-association. Professor MacIver states the case against this view with great force, but I do not think he has done full justice to its strength. And, as I have said, the root of his attitude seems to me to lie in an ultimate and indefinable mysticism which gives him an unconquerable hope the sceptic cannot easily share.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

### WHITHER?

**England.** By WILLIAM RALPH INGE, D.D. (Benn. 10s. 6d.)

**The Babbitt Warren.** By C. E. M. JOAD. (Kegan Paul. 6s.)

As an exhibition of fireworks, Dean Inge's eagerly awaited volume on England in "The Modern World" series will disappoint the more "popular" section of his large public. But there is no doubt that it is the best book he has written. He confesses that it has proved the most difficult literary task he has ever undertaken; and this is easy to believe. As a hasty contributor to the ephemeral Press, the Dean is under no necessity of curbing his violent prejudices and animosities. But lack of restraint, while it may please the multitude and provide racy quotations for the "Sayings of the Week," is the last thing that could be tolerated in a work designed

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for a series whose very *raison d'être* lies in balanced judgment; and the discipline thus imposed upon the Dean has been greatly to his advantage. No book that he has given us has been freer from extravagances and inconsistencies; none has displayed a wider scholarship or a cleaner compression of style.

Dean Inge notoriously takes the whole field of knowledge for his province. But never before has he packed so varied and detailed a wealth of learning into such little room. His outline of the geographical, racial, political, and religious history of England is a miracle of condensation. "Amateurish," in his own word, much of his learning must inevitably be. It is not, however, superficial or crude; and it is the more remarkable and the more delightful because the Dean has not only digested the recognized authorities, but has made intimate acquaintance with many little known, yet very illuminating, documents. Some of his quotations, for example, from obscure foreign critics of England from early times onward are extraordinarily apposite and interesting, and add considerably to the charm with which his own pen has sketched in the social background.

The historical section of the book is not remarkably unorthodox, though it has, needless to say, its challenging points. The Normans, for instance, are clearly detested by the Dean, to such an extent, indeed, that in "the less distinguished officers in the British Army" he clearly recognizes "the Norman type." On the Tudors, the American secession, and (coming down to our own time) on Ireland, the writer holds very pronounced and, to our mind, mistaken views; nor do we regard his analysis of the diplomacy preceding the Great War as being impartial enough, even though he emphasizes the generally "low standard which prevails in international relations." On the whole, however, the Dean's historical survey will provoke less controversy than his estimate of the English character and achievement and his forecast of the future. Among the prime virtues of our national character, humanitarianism (often degenerating into sentimentality) is given first place; and lack of vindictiveness, loyalty to truth, "fair play," and those other qualities that go to the making of a "gentleman" are accounted unto us for righteousness. Our chief defects spring from the same source as our merits—namely, our anti-professionalism, which, so far as our chances of survival as an Empire are concerned, is likely to militate against us in days to come.

With the main trend of his outlook on the future the Dean has already familiarized us elsewhere. His belief, restated here with greater detail, is that even before 1914 natural forces were undermining our political and industrial supremacy, and that the war has greatly accelerated the disintegration of the Empire, while introducing the aeroplane and the submarine, by which we are likely as a nation to lose far more than we stand to gain. Internally, we are threatened by the "Syndicalists," against whom the author launches his sole paragraph of invective. But, after the recent General Strike, even the Dean is less scared of the Syndicalists than he was; and he is at more pains than usual to be fair to the average working man, whom he thinks may be eventually "leavened" by traditional English influences. If social anarchy can be avoided, England will decline with comparative peace into a small and mainly agricultural country, and "in plain living and high thinking will be our salvation, or the salvation of the 'remnant' which will survive the turmoils of an age of transition."

Admirable as is Dean Inge's book as a whole, it contains nothing more attractive than his vigorous and patently sincere restatement of the truth that it is intellectual and spiritual wealth which alone makes a nation truly great. This, too, is the theme of "The Babbitt Warren." But, while the Dean is dignified and grave, Mr. Joad is whimsically merry and witty. Ostensibly about the United States, since "America to-day leads the pack," his little book is in essence an attack upon the false values of our "decadent" modern civilization, which mistakes "hurry for efficiency, mechanical ingenuity for science, connoisseurship for culture, ostentation for art, and, so long as the belief in goodness is accepted as a sufficient substitute for goodness, we may add, hypocrisy for virtue." In his plea for "the things that are more excellent," Mr. Joad is as earnest as Dean Inge. But seldom is it given to a serious philosopher to have so vivacious and sparkling a humour.

## PSYCHOLOGISTS AND PEDAGOGUES

**Psychology and Education.** By R. M. OGDEN. (Routledge. 12s. 6d.)

PSYCHOLOGISTS and pedagogues who, one might expect, would work hand in hand like architects and builders, seem in reality to have little in common. Psychologists theorize as to what constitutes an instinct, the nature of perception and the processes of experience, occasionally throwing in some experiments on white mice or chimpanzees. Pedagogues are mainly occupied in keeping the class in hand and wrestling with the three Rs and the dates of the Kings of England. These are fascinated by ideas and abstractions, those are dominated by practical details. The gulf is wide indeed, yet both parties, conscious that their subject-matter, Mind, is the same, are from time to time forced to attempt to bridge it. The psychologists will deduce from their theories the best method of learning by heart or the teachers will formulate a theory of memory from their methods in the classroom. But at present the theories and the methods do not often coincide, and when they do an impartial observer is often ready to accuse one side or the other of special pleading. Professor of Education at Cornell University, but his chief interest is in the psychological side of the question. He is an ardent follower of Professor Koffka, and it is through his translation of Professor Koffka's "Grundlagen der Psychischen Entwicklung," which he has translated "The Growth of the Mind," that the English-reading public has become acquainted with the hypothesis of *Gestalt* psychology. It is not necessary here to say more of *Gestalt* than that Professor Ogden defines it as "signifying any mental or physical structure the unitariness of which defies analysis." He translates it by the word "configuration," and tells us that configurations are transposable, like melodies, and when they appear and disappear they do so "altogether." The greater part of the book is taken up with the consideration of the instincts, perception, affection, sensation, and memory from this standpoint, and the last four chapters to more purely educational questions.

As there is so little written in English on *Gestalt* psychology, it is perhaps as well to hear all that can be said of it by its supporters; but from the point of view of the practice of education we fear this book will not do much towards effecting the desired union we have spoken of between the theorist and the teacher. It is difficult to discover that this new psychology is intended to produce any methods of teaching not already in use by most enlightened teachers. Everybody knows that in learning by heart "it is better to memorize by wholes than by parts"; everybody knows that "in teaching children to reason and to think we must always make sure that the child is actually passing a judgment," and not merely "giving back in recitation or in written work 'what the teacher wants.'" In some ways, indeed, Professor Ogden seems surprisingly behind the times in his ideas—even pre-Froebel, like too many of our reformers. It is alarming to be told that "Education is work and work is compulsion," or that "failure to differentiate the attitudes of play and work is responsible for a great deal of the dislike for school which many children evince." Does Professor Ogden really think that Beethoven was compelled to compose the C minor Symphony, Michel Angelo to decorate the Medici Chapel, and Darwin to write the "Origin of Species"? If not, and if work is compulsion, we must suppose that these creations were not work. It is a little difficult to make out if this curious confusion between the *play-spirit* and the spirit of *playing at a thing* is an inherent part of the *Gestalt* theory, but we incline to think it is not. In any case the whole chapter on "Imitation and Play" seems one of the weakest in the book.

Is it quite useless to protest against the style in which the book is written? The author seems to be continually hovering between a colloquialism reminiscent of William James, and a stiltedness perhaps due to German influences. Such sentences as the following are painfully common:—

"Thinking is reasoning with words and numbers, with gestures and symbols—in brief, with surrogates which, while they have the disadvantage of being artifacts, have the immense advantage of bringing together common aspects of different figures and putting them in orderly arrangement for application to varied and varying events."

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## SOUTH AFRICA AGAIN

**The South Africans.** By SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)

WHEN one takes up a new book about South Africa, one is apt to ask, rather apprehensively, the Mock Turtle's question, "With what porpoise?" Because, depend upon it, there will be one, an Imperial or a Boer or a Kaffir or even a sort of Utopian United Africa porpoise, and, whichever it is, it will be the only porpoise in the sea. With Mrs. Millin's book, as one gets deeper in, the question changes to "For what public?" Her purpose is clear enough; it is to tell about the past and to describe the present of all the races inhabiting the Union, to give information ranging from a sketch of early history to "Ladies" (in Johannesburg) "call and leave cards." But who is this meant for? News of a far country came: "When the South African visits England, he laughs to himself at the simplicity of the questions people ask him—even people with a University education. 'Do you see wild animals where you are?' (Cape Town or Johannesburg.)" Surely the South African who is lucky enough still to be treated to this is exceptional. One remembers Alice Meynell's young man from Buffalo who was hoping to be suspected of carrying a "gun" in his hip pocket, but who was, in reality, only suspected of wearing a second-hand dinner-jacket; and, from disliking Alice Meynell more than the young man, one swerves round to a feeling of sympathy for her. Mrs. Millin is as voluble and as complacently assured of the ignorance, and interest, of her audience as any Colonial at a tea party in Hampstead, and this has given her style a mixture of perkiness and false pregnancy which is difficult to bear. And yet she is the author of some studies of native town life which are admirable both in style and substance. So this particular book simply illustrates once more the general truth that Africa, taken by and large, is one of the most dangerous subjects in the world. To adapt what was said about Rhodes in a recent novel, "there has been more tripe talked about that place than about anywhere else in creation." Not that Mrs. Millin talks "tripe." Sometimes, very rarely, she writes like this: "The simple truth is that Rhodes . . . had arrived at that stage of unhindered success where a man regards it as his duty to the world to have what he wants." But nearly all the time she talks in a way that has become common form: "It is for what South Africa, the land itself, means to them that South Africans can be happy nowhere else." Follows a descriptive bit, and, inevitably, "And then, underneath all this fierce brightness, also its darkness, the menace and mystery of the land, its hidden past and future. . . ." (the dots are the author's), until the weary reader, stung into flippancy, mutters, "Well, what of it?"

There is plenty of it, as has been indicated by the range of the book. First, the preliminary history—sketchy, and the more picturesque incidents are related at disproportionate length—then the diamond mines, and Rhodes "with his delicate chest and flaming imagination," then the gold mines and Johannesburg—which town Mrs. Millin loves, but she writes about it in just the way everybody does—and, finally, and most important, separate studies of the Boers, the English, the Jews, the Asiatics, the half-castes, the Kaffir. Mrs. Millin has personal knowledge of these various brands of South African, but she gives it out in generalities which are too vague and sweeping, and, sometimes, contradictory. The lack of form in her book makes her often repeat herself. It is the Kaffir question which chiefly interests her, and she stresses its urgency and its difficulty again and again. She does not suggest a solution, beyond a tentative approval of General Hertzog's proposals, and no one will blame her for that. Her sympathy is greater than her specialized knowledge, but, on the whole, these chapters are better than the rest of the book.

## NOVELS IN BRIEF

**In Minden Town.** By M. A. CURTOIS. (Faber & Gwyer. 7s. 6d.)

It becomes apparent only towards the end of this story that it is not quite as paltry as it seems. This is not because the clearing up of the murder mystery might not have been foreseen—it very easily might; but because Miss Curtois in exposing the mystery succeeds in making us believe that she has her own idea of things. She makes us feel with something like horror, as in the case of Florrie, the murdered girl's sister, that all's not right with the world. Beyond this, the book has nothing either to commend or to condemn it: it is readable once it is taken up, it is not particularly interesting or uninteresting; its general insipidity is relieved by pale flashes of pathos. Miss Curtois is extremely mild. Her old country town seems dissolved in a mist, at once benign and gently sinister. Her gentry might have been made up out of a well-used book of rules. With the commoners she is distinctly more successful: at least we have individuals in the Meeke household. Her method of bringing all the characters together in one place to solve the riddle is amusingly reminiscent of the cinema. The author would seem to be unacquainted with some points of English idiom, inasmuch as her adverbs and genitives are rather shaky.

**The Strange Family.** By E. H. LACON WATSON. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)

Those who have some acquaintance with the general run of the seven-and-sixpenny novel may realize what is due to this one when we say that it was well worth the writing. It is not in any way exceptional. It has no particular beauty of idea or phrase; nothing new is contained in what seems to be Mr. Lacon Watson's point: that a woman, perhaps worth nothing, can excite the noblest impulses in several very different men; but it can be read with pleasure by most people and with profit by those who find interest in an account of events whether told by a writer or a fellow-traveller in a railway carriage. For everything has the stamp of the simple English truth as we know it or feel it to be. The story moves from a Midland rectory to Cambridge. The university scenes are well done if a little repetitive; the cricket match at Lord's exciting enough. The characters are distinctly alive both in themselves and in their reactions to each other. Percy Cudden, flamboyant and chivalrous, is the best realized. When we come to Elsie Strange we can perceive the flaw in the book. For the purposes of art, she is altogether too vague and enigmatic. It seems to follow from this that the novel is incomplete in the sense that nothing is finally accomplished, and we are cheated by not having our interest and curiosity fully satisfied. Mr. Lacon Watson writes in a pleasantly conversational style, not distinguished, but never painful.

**Bellarion the Fortunate.** By RAFAEL SABATINI. (Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.)

This story of the Italian wars of the fourteenth century is a worthy companion for the rest of the author's skillful historical romances. The first dozen chapters or so are particularly enlivening, being rich in the escapes and subterfuges, the moments of passion and the impudent humour, necessary to such a story; but the charm of Bellarion, the convent foundling whose journey towards Greek studies was so violently interrupted, is inclined to wane as he becomes a military tactician collecting princedoms and armies, and not an adventurer along the common road of life. Interest is revived towards the end, and if on the whole Bellarion is a hero less lovable than we look for in such a dashing *chanson de geste*, his miraculous career towards fame is described with ardour and a judicious, tense control of the ingredients of love, danger, and horror.

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**T**HE Man-in-the-Street" was a very Important Personage a few years ago. At least he was a much-discussed and oft-quoted individual. But one seldom hears of him nowadays. He has become "The Owner-Driver."

Who is it who has simplified the mechanism of the popular motor car of to-day and thereby made it possible for manufacturers to produce an almost fool-proof carriage, easy to understand, easy to drive, and economical to run and maintain? It is "The Man-in-the-Street" turned "Owner-Driver." He has made up his mind that life is not worth living without a car—one he can look after himself, although his knowledge of applied mechanics be limited to bicycles, lawn mowers, and perambulators. Whilst frightfully clever people have been losing heaps of money producing cars with engines, gear-boxes, and transmission drives of "the most advanced design," a few plain, level-headed men have kept their eye on the very ordinary "Owner-Driver," and by catering for him and his have prevented the British Motor Industry from being gobbed up by foreign competitors. There is nothing easier than to "get on" in the motor trade. All a manufacturer has to do is to produce "the Ideal Car for the Owner-Driver" at a price the Potential Customer cannot resist, and in a few years he is a millionaire!

The Earl of Cardigan declared a few days ago that "the joy of handling a thorough-bred machine . . . has become a thing of no account," and that "a cheap car which will take him from place to place with the minimum of trouble seems to be the average buyer's highest aim."

There is plenty of truth in his Lordship's words, but does he not place the cart before the horse? "The Average Buyer" alias "The Man-in-the-Street" alias "The Owner-Driver" certainly wants a car that will take him from place to place with the minimum of trouble—nothing else would be any use to him at first—but by-and-by tens of thousands who are buying the cheap cars of to-day will crave for something different, and "the joy . . . of experiencing the feel of higher grade workmanship under one's control" will be theirs as soon as they can afford to pay for it."

The Earl of Cardigan wants "character" in his automobile. So do I, but if we each desire a car different from the rest it is going to cost thousands of pounds. What we do in practice is to join with a few hundred other people in the selection of a car of "character." If we could persuade thousands to buy this connoisseur's car we should help the manufacturer immensely, get our own cars very much cheaper, and assist in improving the breed. This is the direction in which one would like to see more progress made. I don't think the taste for a thoroughbred car is disappearing, but it is a taste only the small minority can indulge. Connoisseurs must make their voices heard and convince some manufacturer that it would pay him to adopt the courageous policy of producing a car of "character" in greater quantities and at a lower price. It is done in the United States, and some day it will be done in Old England. It is all a question of organization and salesmanship.

One day I asked David Beecroft, the outstanding figure amongst American motor journalists, what he considered was the finest thing the automobile industry had done. "Made people happy," was the charming answer. British manufacturers by bringing down the price of light cars have taken "The Man-in-the-Street" out of his aimless existence and made a real Happy Husband and Parent of him, and if his youngsters' knowledge of cars already surpasses his own, he doesn't care. In fact he rather likes it.

To make our Homeland happy again we must have cars that are cheap and will take the Owner-Driver and his family "from place to place with the minimum of trouble." But price-cutting must be carried out with discernment. Britain's reputation for quality of material and reliability must be maintained, and there should be no false economy in placing contracts for magnetos, ignition coils, or electric equipment.

With all his self-acquired knowledge of a motor car my friend "The Owner-Driver" doesn't shine as an electrical expert, and if there is a worry he prays to be saved from it is "ignition trouble." He will bless the firms who fit the best ignition system they can find, even if they don't give him an electric cigar-lighter or "ladies' companion!"

RAYNER ROBERTS.

Mr. Rayner Roberts has for many years been recognized as an exceptionally well-informed writer on motoring subjects, and his wide experience as an Owner-Driver is at the service of our readers. Communications should be addressed to the Motor Editor, THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, W.C.1.

# A WORD TO READERS

## Exclusive New Feature

In the current issue of THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM the first of a series of weekly articles on motoring begins under the heading: "The Owner-Driver."

Mr. Rayner Roberts, we are glad to announce, has agreed to act as our Motor Editor. He was the late Mr. Walter Staner's Northern Editorial Representative of *The Autocar*, and acted in a similar capacity for *The Motor Trader* and other sections of the Motor Press, distinguishing himself by his bright, shrewd, and independent comment.

Few men have had a closer study of the motor car from the Owner-Driver's point of view, and we are confident that he will give to our Motor Page a distinctive and authoritative touch which readers of THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM are accustomed to find in the other features of our paper.

Mr. Roberts's wide experience is at the service of all our readers, who may communicate with him at any time, as is suggested at the foot of the adjoining column.

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The Final Results of our Religious Questionnaire have been delayed in order that Overseas readers might participate. Their replies are now being received, and it is possible to announce the publication of the final results.

These will appear in our issue of October 16. Readers who have not yet filled in their forms may still do so, and if they require further forms may have them on application to:

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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## GILT-EDGED WEAKNESS—OIL—KENNECOTT COPPER

THE gilt-edged market is definitely depressed. War Loan can be bought at a price which, allowing for accrued interest, yields almost 5 per cent. Conversion  $4\frac{1}{2}$  has fallen to  $94\frac{7}{8}$ , at which price, allowing for redemption, it yields just over 5 per cent. Conversion  $3\frac{1}{2}$  has fallen under 74. Some of the better Colonial loans are standing at prices which yield well over 5 per cent. The new Victoria 5 per cent. issued at  $98\frac{1}{2}$  can now be bought at that figure. The gilt-edged market is affected by the depressing nature of the overseas trade returns and the fear of a higher Bank rate next month. There is further apprehension of the New York situation. With American trade and industry seasonally more active there is talk of another rise in the New York rediscountrate. Call money rates in New York this week have touched  $5\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. We would certainly share the fear of a higher New York rate if the New York Stock Exchange had not already shown signs of breaking on its own accord. Even high class investments have been affected in the last few days. Shell Union, for example, has come down to  $28\frac{1}{2}$ . A recrudescence in Wall Street of the speculative fever would probably push the New York rediscountrate up to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., but the more pressing problem which the gilt-edged market in London has to face is the autumn strain on the exchanges as affected by the abnormal trade position. The following table shows the fall in prices of the leading gilt-edged stocks and the present yields per cent.:

Security.	Price Aug. 25.	Price Sept. 22.	Yields.	
			Flat.	Allowing for Redemption
War 5%, 1929/47	101 $\frac{1}{2}$	101 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 19 10	4 18 11
Locality 8% (qrly. divs.)	68 $\frac{1}{2}$	65 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 10 3	4 10 3
Funding 4%, 1940/90	96 $\frac{1}{2}$	85 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 14 10	4 15 9
Victory 4%, large	98	92 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 6 11	4 9 0
Conversion 8 $\frac{1}{2}\%$ (after 1931)	75 $\frac{1}{2}$	70 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 14 9	4 14 9
Conversion 4 $\frac{1}{2}\%$ , 1940/4	90 $\frac{1}{2}$	94 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 15 8	5 0 1
N. War 5%, Oct. 1927	105 $\frac{1}{2}$	105 8-10	4 15 1	4 12 8
N. War 4%, Oct. 1927 (tax free)	100	99 15-16	4 0 0	—
Treasury 5 $\frac{1}{2}\%$ (A & B) Apr. 1st, 1929	102 $\frac{1}{2}$	102 1-10	4 7 9	4 18 5
Treasury 5% (D) Feb. 1st, 1927	100 $\frac{1}{2}$	100 1-82	5 0 0	4 18 6

Since compiling this table, prices have somewhat improved on a more hopeful feeling with regard to the coal negotiations.

September is usually a good month for the American oil industry because the consumption of gasolene is reaching its zenith. Crude oil prices have held firm in America in the last month in spite of the continued increase in production, but a break may come in October or November, if our view of the situation is correct. It should be understood that events in the American oil industry this year have worked to the advantage of the oil producers. Usually new fields are discovered and developed in the spring. This year none of the new fields had reached its developed stage before the middle of the summer, at which time the consumption of oil products was reaching its height. That is chiefly why mid-continent crude oil prices have held firm this summer instead of breaking badly as in four out of the last five years. The fact that much of the increase in production in the last two months has come from the Texas Panhandle field, which is not yet connected by pipeline with the markets, has also helped to keep crude oil prices steady. In the next two months, however, when the consumption of gasolene is lower and at least two of the new fields (Seminole field in Oklahoma and the Upton Crane field in West Texas) have reached their maxima, the break in prices

should come. It should be realized that if production maintains its present level during the remainder of the year, the total oil output of the United States for the year will be slightly greater than in 1925, which was a record year.

The oil share market in London has been weaker. The fact that it has been seeking to gain strength from the interim report issued by the Federal Oil Conservation Board, which lent its official seal to the scare that there are only six years' supply in the proved oil areas in the United States, is in itself a sign of weakness. The oil shortage scare is an old story that has been circulated from time to time as it suits the oil producers or the politicians. The estimate of six years' supply is not the majority opinion in the American oil industry. The majority opinion was expressed by the Committee appointed by the American Petroleum Institute to assist the Oil Conservation Board on the question of demand and supply. This Committee reported: (1) that there is no imminent danger of the exhaustion of the petroleum reserves of the United States; (2) that oil recoverable by present methods of flowing and pumping from existing wells and proved acreage amounts to 5,300,000,000 barrels (against the Oil Conservation Board's estimate of 4,500,000,000 barrels); (3) that improved methods of deep drilling below oil sands now producing will disclose in many areas deposits not hitherto available which will be tantamount to the discovery of new fields; (4) that the quantity of oil left in the ground under producing and proved areas after flowing and pumping have ceased to produce oil, may be estimated at no less than 26,894,157,000 barrels which can be recovered by known processes of mining and flooding; (5) that oil reserves greater than all these lie in some 1,100,000,000 acres of land which geology indicates as capable of oil bearing. These conclusions make the six years' supply estimate of the Oil Conservation Board, which applies to estimates 2, 3, and 4 of the Committee, appear absurd.

The position of the Kennecott Copper Corporation of which we gave particulars last week is stronger than its own balance-sheet discloses. Its subsidiaries are entirely free from funded debt, and have in some cases hidden reserves. The consolidated balance-sheet on December 31st, 1925, of Utah Copper and Bingham & Garfield Railway, of which Kennecott Copper holds over 95 per cent. of the capital stock, shows a total profit and loss surplus of \$56 $\frac{1}{2}$  millions and a surplus of current assets over current liabilities of \$22 millions, while the net tangible assets applicable to the capital stock work out at \$44.79 per share of \$10 par value. The Nevada Consolidated Copper Company, which is controlled by the Utah Copper Company through about 51 per cent. stock ownership, has also no bonded debt. We would emphasize the point that the attractiveness of Kennecott Copper does not depend upon any prospect of a rise in the price of copper, but on its low costs of production, and its strong financial position. We do not suggest that statistically the copper position is unsound. Stocks at refineries in America are somewhat under normal, showing a small increase at the beginning of September at 66,658 short tons. In this country it is estimated that stocks will be reduced by the end of this year to about 85,000 tons, which will compare with 56,000 tons a year ago. Kennecott Copper shares have reacted slightly, and at the time of writing stand about 55 $\frac{1}{2}$ , New York terms, at which price the yield is about £7 3s. 6d. per cent.

